

NEW ELEMENTS 14 GUIDE!

Recent updates revealed, including step-by-step tutorials on the top new features

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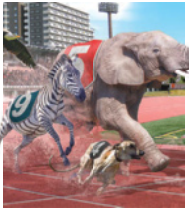
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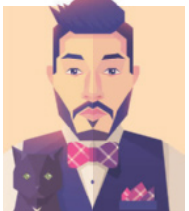
Edit images creatively

Apply adjustments for fun compositions



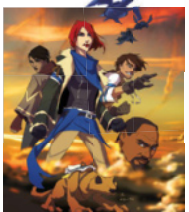
Re-create low-poly art

Draw a simple geometric portrait



Master flat colouring

Make sure your poster stands out



Use layers and masks

Create stunning abstract artwork



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12 PRACTICAL PAINTING PROJECTS

► Achieve realistic skin and eyes ► Master foliage
► Create textured hair ► Paint water, fire and more



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Photoshop's basic 3D tools

+ INSIDE!

Design your
own calendar

Learn to add
atmosphere

Make comic-
book captions

Add drama with
filters and more

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Imagine Publishing Ltd
Richmond House 33 Richmond Hill
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☎ +44 (0) 1202 586200
Web: www.photoshopcreative.co.uk
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Magazine team

Editor Sarah Bankes

sarah.bankes@imagine-publishing.co.uk
☎ 01202 586252

Senior Designer Dan Bevan

Editor in Chief Amy Squibb

Senior Staff Writer Mark White

Photographer James Sheppard

Senior Art Editor Duncan Crook

Publishing Director Aaron Asadi

Head of Design Ross Andrews

Contributors

Amro Ashry, Matt Bennett, Jo Cole, David Cousens,
Sarah Cousens, Andy Hau, Rebekka Hearl, Kirk Nelson,
Jenni Sanders, Sarah Shirlcliffe, Daniel Sinoca,
Andre Villanueva and Stewart Wood

Advertising

Digital or printed media packs are available on request.

Head of Sales Hang Deretz

☎ 01202 586442
hang.deretz@imagine-publishing.co.uk

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International

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Head of International Licensing Cathy Blackman

☎ +44 (0) 1202 586401
licensing@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Subscriptions

subscriptions@imagine-publishing.co.uk

For all subscription enquiries email:

pcreate@servicehelpline.co.uk

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☎ Overseas +44 1795 592 871

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Circulation

Head of Circulation Darren Pearce

☎ 01202 586200

Production

Production Director Jane Hawkins

☎ 01202 586200

Finance

Finance Director Marco Peroni

Founder

Group Managing Director Damian Butt

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☎ + 61 2 8667 5288

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Many of us shy away from digital painting, especially if we have not picked up a paintbrush since our schooldays. However, by mastering some of the most basic elements, it's possible to paint stunning landscape and portrait images in

Photoshop. This issue's feature shows you how to paint skin, eyes, hair, leaves, water, fire and much more. Turn to p12 and follow the step-by-step guides. The issue is also packed full of creative tutorials that include creating a geometric portrait, comic-book art and simple 3D text effects. We're also excited to show you some of the brand new features of Elements 14. Check out the 16-page guide that starts on p63 and discover what's new and what's been updated. Don't forget there are hundreds of free resources on this issue's FileSilo too, so download them and start creating today!

Sarah Bankes

Sarah Bankes **Editor**

sarah.bankes@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Contents

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Q&A
Your Photoshop
questions
answered
P90

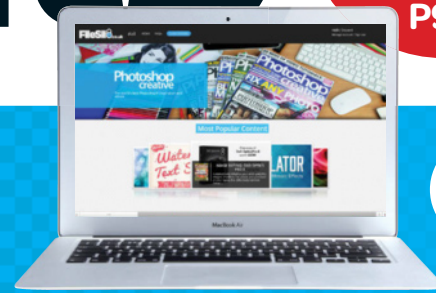
Essentials

- 06 Readers' gallery**
Take a look at what your fellow readers have been up to this issue
- 10 Readers' challenge**
Enter our competition for a chance to win an Editors Keys keyboard!
- 12 Feature: 12 practical painting projects**
Learn how to paint some of the most essential subjects
- 24 Tutorials**
Start learning new skills this issue with a host of creative tutorials
- 82 Reviews**
A Nikon camera, PhotoKey 7 Pro and the Intuos Draw
- 88 Subscribe**
Never miss an issue when you have it delivered (US readers p62)
- 90 Q&A essentials**
Your Photoshop Elements, CS and CC problems solved
- 94 FileSilo**
This issue there are hundreds of free resources worth \$214!
- 98 Expert interview**
We talk about the importance of being unique to Mariana Angelova



Tutorials

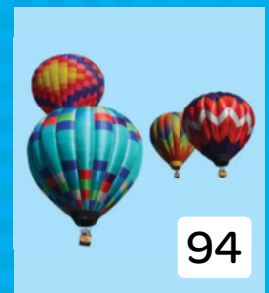
- 24 Use adjustments for creative edits**
Composite a fun animal-race scene using the Puppet Warp tool
- 30 Draw a geometric portrait**
Master the Polygonal Lasso to re-create low-poly artwork
- 34 Add atmosphere with the Adobe Color CC app**
Create colour palettes in this nifty app to take into Photoshop
- 38 Inject some drama with filters and more**
Enhance your sports shots to give them more edge
- 42 Create floating abstract art**
Mix shapes and photos with masks, layer styles and imagination
- 46 Flat colour your comic-book posters**
Apply blend modes, brushes and the Lasso tool to alter colour
- 50 Draw comic-book elements**
Use the Pen tool with filters to make typical comic-book art
- 54 Apply digital make-up**
Retouch your portrait images by using gradients and the Brush tool
- 58 Create 3D hedge text**
Learn some simple 3D techniques to make a word out of a hedge



FileSilo

YOUR FREE PHOTOSHOP RESOURCES ARE HERE!

- ✓ This issue: brushes, stock images, textures, backgrounds, fonts, plug-ins and more
- ✓ Plus files to follow the tutorials
- ✓ Free and ready for you to download today!



Elements creative

- 64 Welcome to Elements 14**
Discover what's new in the latest version of Photoshop Elements
- 66 Quick Edit mode**
Make simple touch-ups and learn how to use Smart Looks filters
- 68 Guided Edit mode**
Master the new Motion Blur and Resize Your Photo edits
- 72 Expert mode**
Select with Fine Detail, remove haze and reduce picture shake
- 76 Design a calendar**
Make a personalised calendar with this creative project

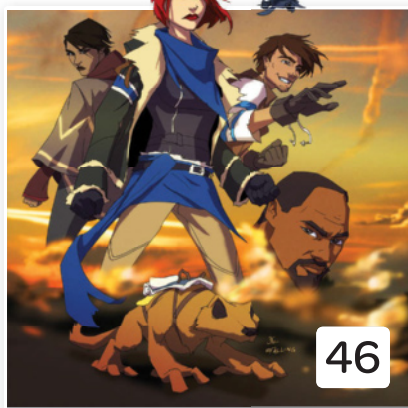
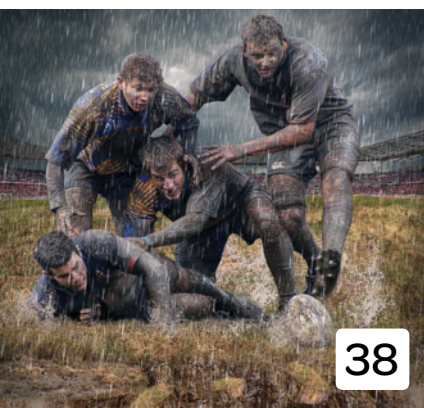


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Turn to page 88 to get this amazing deal! US page 62

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12 PRACTICAL PAINTING PROJECTS

Learn techniques for painting some of the most essential subjects, from human features to earthly elements



READERS' IMAGES

Welcome to an inspirational round-up of great Photoshop artwork created by none other than your fellow readers



César Oliveira

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/blogcesaroliveira@gmail.c

"When creating this image, the most time-consuming part was adding the subjects. I used the Refine Edge feature to cut around their hair, I masked to merge them and I used adjustments, blend modes and the High Pass filter to add more clarity in the scene."



BE A PART OF IT!

The first volume in our digital 'Hall of Fame' series is out now, and the second one is coming soon! We're continuing to select our favourite entries from the Readers' Gallery. To be in with a chance of receiving a Hall of Fame stamp, submit your best digital art today!



Willy Borgnino

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/willynet33

Image of the issue

"The weapon was the basis of this image, so I cropped the image of a soldier so he would be holding the weapon. I added a suitable background and the fog, and altered the brightness and contrast."



Gabriel Ambrozio

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/gabrielambrozio

"This image was made with Photoshop CS5, and took around three to four hours to create. I used a few different images to create it, and the blending of the skull with the Earth was perhaps the hardest thing to manage."





Márcia Nakamoto

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/MarciaNakamoto

"This picture was made for a Photoshop challenge. The start image was of these two boys dressed as playing, so I thought of a paper aeroplane. I added colour effects, and I was very happy with the result: it shows that imagination is powerful!"



Luke Bailey

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/luke123

"After adding each image to a new Photoshop project, I blended them together, making sure my colour layers were set to Overlay. This way the colours would help the image pop out of the picture."



Lorri Kajenna

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Kajenna

"In this picture, I wanted to depict a humorous scene of what a cat might get up to on his holidays. I used brushes and tried to keep the colours as realistic as possible in this digital painting."



Otávio Milani

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/otaviomilani

"This image was created in CS6 and inspired by the idea of an apocalypse. I used adjustments like Photo Filter, Color Balance and Black & White."



Maciej Matuszak

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/inspireyourmind

"I wanted this picture to be both cold and warm, so after I comped three pictures together, I added a bright, hot sunset to contrast against the sea. I finished with a slight vignette and a subtle lens flare over the shot."





Lucy Dyer

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/DickiesBint

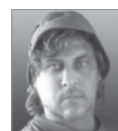
"This was my take on a tutorial I saw online. I loved the simplicity of the original, and so by using simple textures and brushes, I came up with something unique from that original interpretation."



Thomas Lennon

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/LittleTimmy

"This was created through my love of colour and non-destructive adjustment layers. I wanted to create something meaningful that people could relate to. For me, colour is extremely important, as it sets the tone and will determine the end result."



Sergey Likhachev

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Batkya

"This was created with a Photoshop challenge in mind. The noble warrior in the foreground really anchors the whole picture, as he's a striking red against the greens of the background; a lot of attention was paid to the blending of this picture."

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READERS' CHALLENGE

Upload your images to photoshopcreative.co.uk

Challenge entries

The best entries and overall challenge winner

1 Corine Spring

Small Imaginary Town

"This entry used all four starting images, focused on the car and was composed using Photoshop and a graphics tablet. It was inspired by the artwork of Mr.Xerty."

2 Trevor Budd

She's Living in a Dream World

"I created this surreal image using various cutouts, blend modes and a host of other Photoshop tools."

3 Frank Cervantes

Intergalactic Portal

"My entry shows a futuristic car in flight, and takes on a science-fiction theme, using the nebula as a portal."

4 Wendy Irwin

The Book About Everything

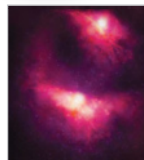
"I enjoyed editing the book to make the pages look open and I added the car and the umbrella to the insides. I then created the water."



Readers' Challenge WINNER

We challenged you

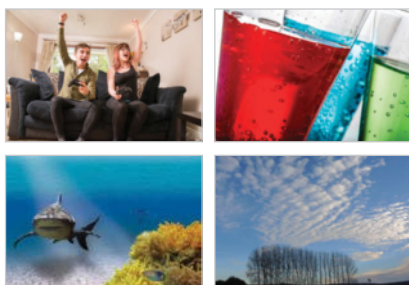
In Issue 131, we challenged you to get creative with these images. You were allowed to use any or all of the pictures, and whatever other resources you chose.



This issue's challenge

Think you can do better? Prove it!

Get creative with the supplied images and you could win a fantastic prize! Use as many of the images as you like (from previous issues too!) and include your own photos if you wish. Head to www.photoshopcreative.co.uk and hit the Challenge link. Good luck!



WORTH
£100!

THE PRIZE...

Editors Keys backlit keyboard worth £100!

One lucky winner of this issue's Readers' Challenge will win an awesome Editors Keys Photoshop keyboard. The keyboard has every Photoshop command printed on its keys, and is backlit for when you're working in the dark; it can speed up your workflow, make you quicker in Photoshop and it looks great on your desk!



7 PHOTOKEY7PRO

RUNNERS'-UP PRIZE...

FXHOME PhotoKey 7 Pro worth £233

Three runners-up, plus the winner, will receive a PhotoKey 7 Pro software bundle, to help with any green screen project. Check out our review of the software on page 84, and download an exclusive pack of assets for use in PhotoKey 7 or Photoshop from the FileSilo now!

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12 PRACTICAL PAINTING PROJECTS

Learn techniques for painting some of the most essential subjects, from human features to earthly elements

Digital painting can be one of the most rewarding skills to master in Photoshop, particularly for those to whom painting does not come naturally. Whether you're an experienced digital painter or about to approach it for the first time, it's important to get to grips with some of the most-painted subjects.

If you want to paint portraits, you need to know how to create realistic skin, eyes, lips, hair and of course limbs. If you're more of a landscape painter, you need to know how to create trees, leaves,

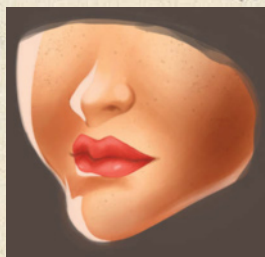
grass and clouds. These are the fundamental elements that make up these sorts of pictures, so practise getting them right.

We are going to teach you how to paint these subjects and more, and even include tips on how to paint fur, fire and water. With practical, step-by-step guides to follow, you'll have the foundations sorted in no time, and be well on your way to painting incredible portrait and landscape art.

On the FileSilo

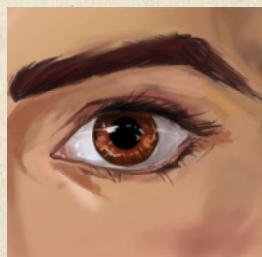
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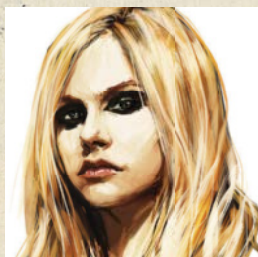
SKIN & LIPS

Learn how to paint soft and sharp shadows on a person's face, and choose colour palettes.



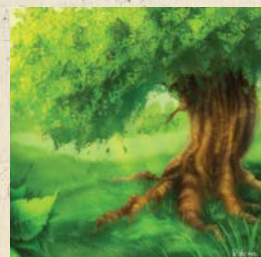
EYES

Master techniques for inferring the shape of eyes by using shading to show contours.



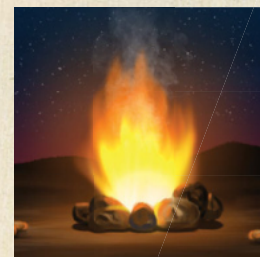
HAIR

Discover how to build colours on top of a black underpainting, working from dark to light.



TREES & GRASS

See how textured brushes really come in handy for painting any type of foliage.



FIRE

Use the brush Painting Mode to create different colour effects and play around with shapes.

HAIR

From the Mixer Brush, use a Flat Angle Low Bristle Count and Round Curve Brush. Set a Size of 23-60px. Change Wet to 8%, Load: 8%, Mix: 8%, Flow: 27%. Sample All Layers must be On.

EYES

Go to the Brush tool, select Soft Round Brush and set Size to 9-15px. Use Rough Round Bristle brush for extra effects on the eyes. Use the Blur tool to make the eyes smoother.

SKIN

A basic skin tone of #e3bea7 was used here. Use a Soft Round brush, Opacity: 100%. Use the Mixer Brush, change Wet to 12%, Load: 10%, Mix: 8%, Flow: 12%. Sample All Layers must be off. Then apply the Smudge tool.



12 PRACTICAL PAINTING PROJECTS

BRUSHES

While painting in Photoshop can really connect you with your creative side, there are hundreds of secrets on how to create the perfect painting. Scatter brushes are great for hair and fur, smudging is good for soft skin, realistic fire and achieving fluffier clouds, and you can get specific brushes for leaves or water.

There really is a brush for everything in Photoshop, and plenty of tricks that you can use for any kind of project. Here are some to get you started...

CANVAS

Finish your picture by inserting a canvas texture. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+L to use the Levels to keep it a neutral shade, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U to desaturate and turn to Overlay.

DETAIL

Use a thinly-tipped, stiff brush to create detailed brush strokes; these can be useful for facial features or simply adding strands of grass, as in this picture.

EXPERT TIP

Finish with adjustments

Once you've completed your painting, a little cohesion goes a long way. Adding adjustment layers can unify the colours and create a less messy palette, particularly the Gradient Map or Photo Filter. Experiment with different ones to discover what works best.

CUSTOM BRUSHES

Use custom watercolour brushes in conjunction with more traditional default Photoshop brushes to add flourishes to your pictures, such as these clouds.

SMUDGED EFFECT

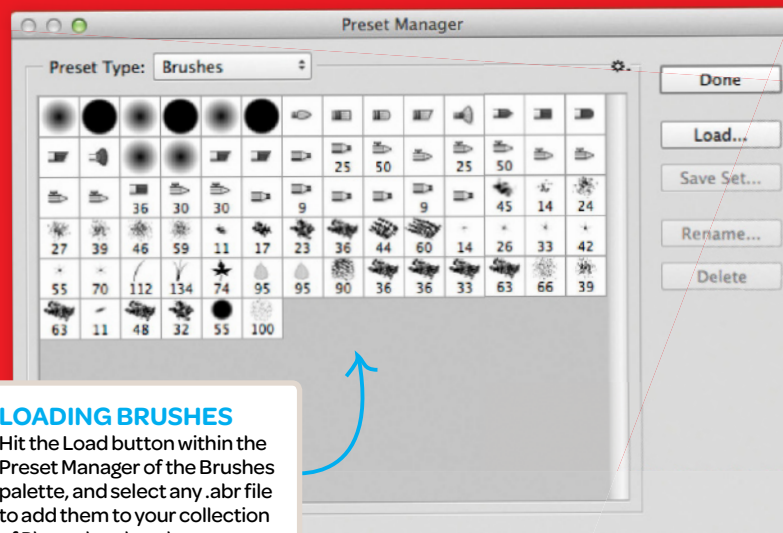
Use the Mixer Brush, the Smudge tool, or simply big, soft brushes to create a smokey, smudged effect in areas of your picture.

Use custom brushes

Of course, the set brushes that come with Photoshop aren't always enough for every kind of project, but you don't have to make do. Custom brushes mean you can achieve whatever effect you are after.

You are able to create your own brushes by making selections in Photoshop and going to Edit>Define Brush Preset, or by downloading the Adobe Capture app (we even showed you how to create brushes in our practical feature in issue 132).

Go to the Preset Manager within the Brushes menu to load a set of brushes. Custom brushes can inject a sense of individuality into your work, but they also give you complete control of your project.



LOADING BRUSHES

Hit the Load button within the Preset Manager of the Brushes palette, and select any .abr file to add them to your collection of Photoshop brushes.

MOUSE vs GRAPHICS TABLET

Graphics tablet

- CONS**
 - Often expensive
 - Learning curve
 - Quality can vary
 - Takes up a lot of desk space
 - Not compatible with older computers
- PROS**
 - Smoothness
 - More control
 - Improved workspace
 - Touch sensitivity
 - Closer to using a pen and paper
 - Better precision



Mouse

- CONS**
 - Lack of precision
 - Lack of smoothness
 - Harder for left-handers to control
 - Quality dependent on surface
 - Less of a natural drawing process
- PROS**
 - Capable of making simple drawings
 - Doesn't take time to learn
 - More common
 - More portable
 - Doesn't require any calibration
 - Good for pixel art



PAINTING FROM A PHOTO vs PAINTING FROM SCRATCH

Painting from scratch is perhaps the best option for anyone wildly creative, and for anyone who loves letting their imagination dictate how a project looks.

Create a sketch first if need be, and then draw on top of that, using layers and brushes to create something unique. The advantage of this technique is that you can paint more freely, and a photo won't shackle you from keeping to the lines and shapes of reality. This is the perfect option for anyone creating fantasy landscapes or magical characters.



PAINT FROM A PHOTO

If you're new to digital painting (or even experienced), it can be a good idea to use a photo as a reference.

Painting from a photo has obvious benefits; as a real-world equivalent, it's like using tracing paper to draw the outline of your artwork first. Painting from a photo means that you can keep the realism from your original reference image. You have a better idea of where to keep the detail, and it's easy to duplicate your original layer and leave it on top of your layer stack, at a low opacity to tone down the painted effect.

Photosh.



12 PRACTICAL PAINTING PROJECTS

1. SKIN

Mastering the art of drawing people is a long and rocky road, and one of the most important hurdles to conquer is painting skin. Painting experts will demand that you mix greens and blues into your skin tones to make them look more realistic, but that's an advanced technique we'll be omitting in this tutorial. We'll be looking instead at how to paint soft and sharp shadows on a person's face, as this can be enough to get the desired effect. You'll need a soft brush, and a palette of skin tones prepared beforehand.

EXPERT TIP

Blemishes

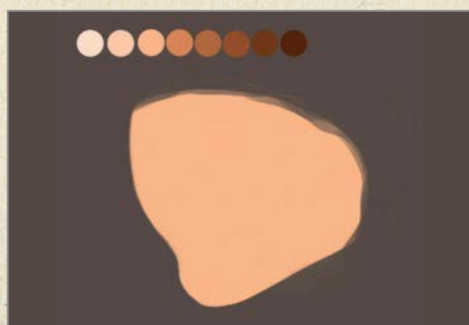
It can be very easy to make skin look too perfect when working with digital media. To avoid this, paint in some blemishes. Use a very small soft brush with a low opacity setting (30-45%) to add small, barely noticeable freckles around the cheeks and nose. You only need a few.

SOFT CHEEKS

Typically, cheeks are soft, smooth, rounded surfaces, and will need shading to match. Sharp, contrasting shading denotes a hard surface - don't paint like that on cheeks!

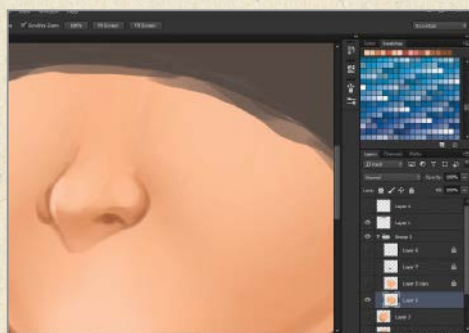
CONTRAST

The more contrast you give the shading on your face, the more 3D it will look. Try not to overdo it though, particularly in soft areas like the cheeks.



Block in the midtone

01 With your skin-tone palette prepared and your soft brush (200px) at the ready, select a midtone (a basic peach, not too dark, not too light) and paint in the shape of the lower part of the face, like a bowl with a rounded pinch for the chin.

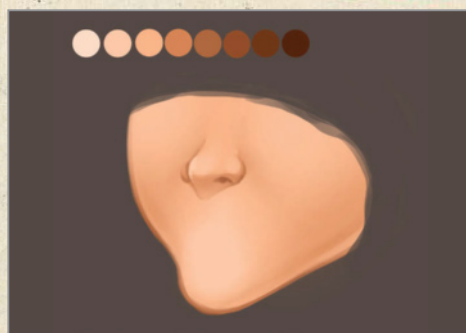
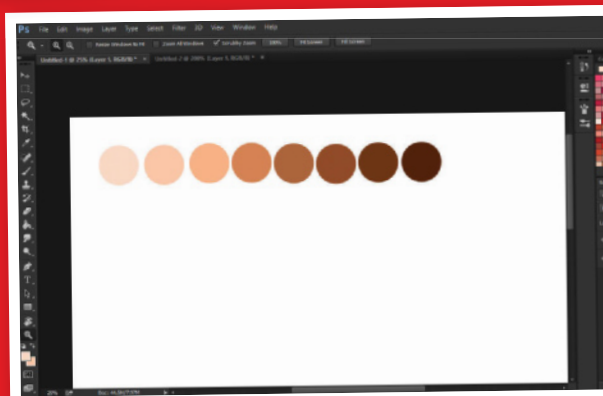


Draw the nose

02 Start by drawing in the nose. Select the next darkest skin colour and use the soft brush (60% Opacity) to draw in a nose shape. Make it pop out from the face by ensuring the underside is shaded well, and by painting a lighter skin tone on the tip.

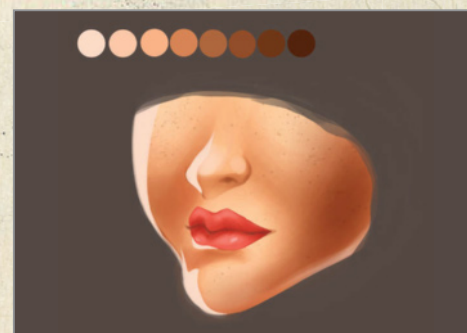
Suitable skin tones

People's skin tones can vary wildly, so you need to do a bit of experimenting with different palettes. If you're having trouble creating a palette that works, a quick Google search for 'skin tone palette' will yield many useful results.



Brush in the cheeks and chin

03 The cheeks and chin will require a softer treatment. For soft cheeks, use a large soft brush (250px+) with low opacity (10% and below) set to Multiply, and gently shade around the cheeks. Paint back over the shading with the midtone (turn Multiply off) to blend the shading.



Rinse and repeat

04 Keep shading in this way, using darker tones if necessary; go back over the nose if the shading isn't strong enough. Add some stark highlights: make a new layer, select your lightest colour, set your brush Opacity to 90% and paint around the cheek and nose.

2. EYES

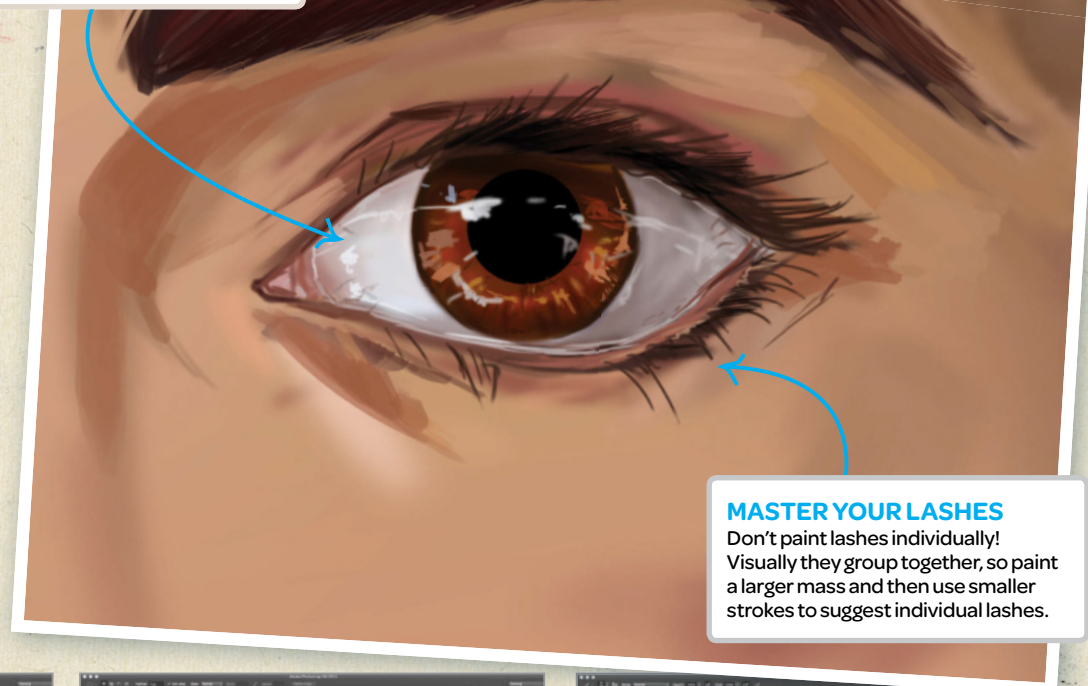
The moment we are born we are fascinated with eyes. There's nothing more instantly expressive on somebody's face; eyes allow us to see the true emotion someone is experiencing even if the rest of their face is trying to tell us a different story.

As such, the eyes are the most important part of the face to paint correctly. They are often the first point a viewer will look at, and they can make or break your painting.

When painting eyes, it is very important to remember that they are round. Although we only see a small fraction of the eye, we can still infer the shape by painting in shading showing the face's contours. This helps add life to the eyes.

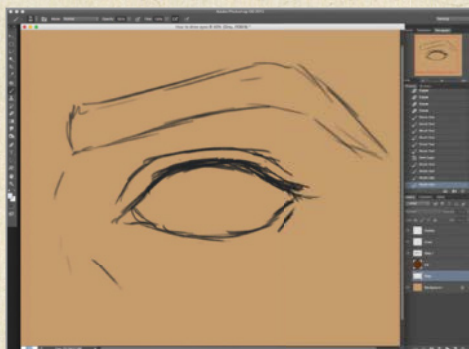
EYES LOOK WET

Add thin white strokes where the fluid in your eyes pools around the top eyelid and tear duct. Add a more noticeable amount that rests on the bottom eyelid.



MASTER YOUR LASHES

Don't paint lashes individually! Visually they group together, so paint a larger mass and then use smaller strokes to suggest individual lashes.



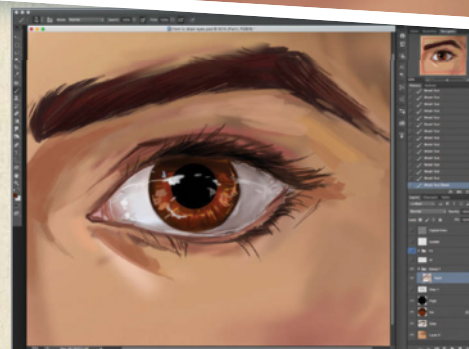
Establish the rough shape

01 Create a new rough layer to sketch the eye shape. All eyes look different, but tend to resemble an almond shape tilted slightly downwards towards the nose. For realism, add an eyebrow, a strong line for the top eyelid and a more subtle indication of the lower eyelid.



Add the iris and pupil

02 The iris is a perfect circle, but almost always obscured by part of the upper eyelid, and appears to rest on the lower eyelid. Use the Circular Marquee (Shift+M) to create a selection and fill it. Make a smaller circle selection and fill it with black to make the pupil.



Define shadows

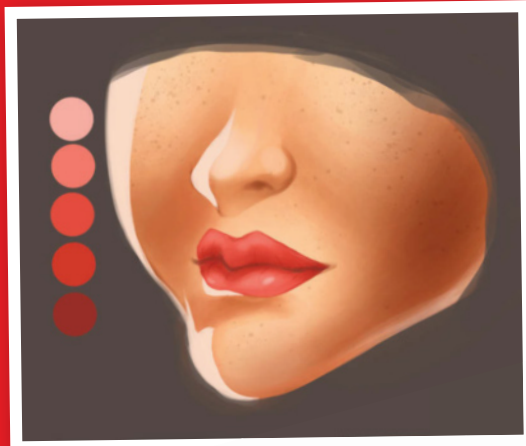
03 Never paint the whites of the eyes white; use grey. Add shading cast by the brow, also at the top of the eyelid and some underneath the lower lid. Add stronger eyelashes along the top lid. Paint reflected light over the pupil with a small white brush.

3. LIPS

When you come to create the lips on your portrait, create a new layer, use a small soft brush with 90% Opacity and pick a dark brown from your skin palette to draw a smile. Have a look at some reference images and you'll see that lips aren't perfectly straight; so curve your line, particularly at the corners. Make a layer beneath that one, and use your lip midtone to fill in the flat colour. Use the technique you used to shade the cheeks to shade the lips. Finish by adding highlights using your brightest pinks and an 80% Opacity brush.

Suitable lip tones

As with skin, lip tone can vary; we've stuck with the typical pinks and reds here. When choosing colours, keep the tones natural. In the Color Picker, move the slider up from red nearer to orange, and pick colours of medium saturation for a natural look. Experiment with different lip-tone palettes – and definitely play around with lipstick colours for extra fun!



12 PRACTICAL PAINTING PROJECTS

4. HAIR

Painting hair in Photoshop is a really tricky thing to get right. The temptation is always to go straight for the fun parts of painting hair flowing around all over the place, but doing so ends up looking wrong.

As with anything you are painting from scratch, to paint hair well, you have to observe how hair behaves; note that it follows the form of the head (and even shoulders) and clumps together. It rather has a mass of its own.

You should always start with an almost black underpainting, and build colours on top. Get in the habit of working from dark to light for every hair colour – even light blonde has darker tones underneath it.

EXPERT TIP

Get richer colours

To add a little bit of variety and richness to hair, make sure you create a new layer above the hair and then set its blending mode to Overlay. Use a mixture of lighter and darker colours from the hair and paint messily on top of them.

This adds depth, which helps with realism.

1. PAINT THE BASE DARK

Unlike skin, where you should start with midtones, when painting hair you should always start with the darkest colour you'll be using; it will show through the other brushstrokes. Paint a solid base colour.

2. BLOCK IN LARGE LOCKS

Broadly block in large sections (locks) of hair. Don't start trying to paint individual strands at this stage! Consider how the locks will rest upon the head. Use midtones and don't use any highlights.

4. FINISH WITH DETAILS

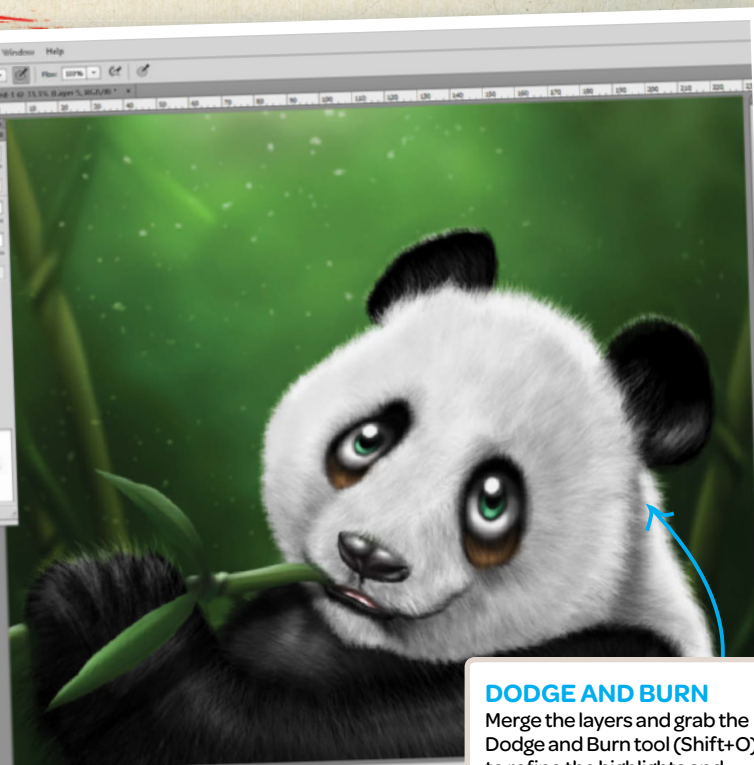
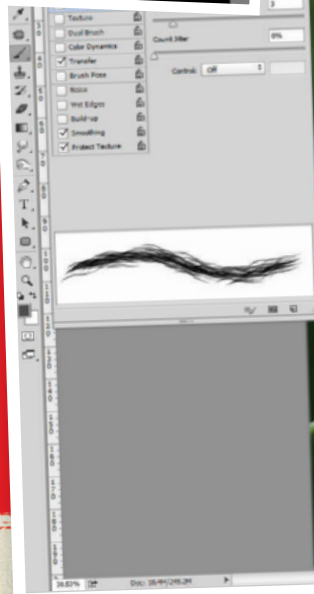
Create a new layer; it's finally time to add detailed strands. Following the forms established in earlier steps, use a hard-edged brush to paint in flyaway hairs but don't get carried away adding loads!

3. ADD HIGHLIGHTS

Use a speckled brush to blend the locks together in places (don't hide them completely, though). Vary colours. Add highlights, thinking about how your light source meets the head shape.

5. FUR

Painting fur is simpler than you might think. First, open the Brush panel (F5) and grab one of the standard rounded brushes or load our exclusive 'Fur_Brushes.abr' from the FileSilo. Now use the Shape Dynamics to determine the variance of brush marks and then alter the Scattering options to set the position of the strokes. Change the brush Size and Distance. Begin painting the strands using dark colours. Add new layers and gradually lighten the tones. Work in small areas, paying attention to the direction of the fur. Refine the shadows and highlights as many times as needed.



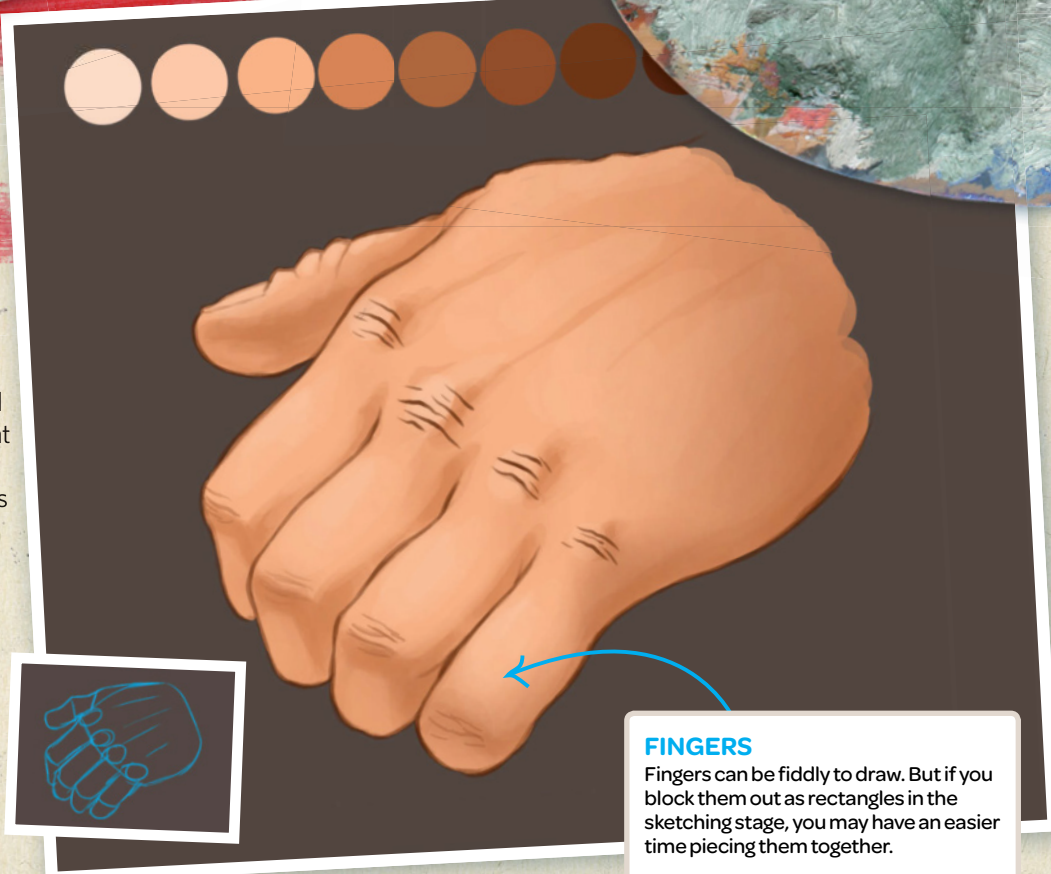
DODGE AND BURN

Merge the layers and grab the Dodge and Burn tool (Shift+O) to refine the highlights and shadows of the image.

6. LIMBS

Painting skin can be an extremely tricky technique to master; its look changes depending on which part of the body it belongs to, so there's a lot to consider (and observe!). For example, ears are translucent and will let light seep through; cheeks are typically soft, but skin covering boney areas like knuckles and the collarbone is taught. And each of these variants needs to be painted in different ways!

We'll be looking at a limb that requires soft and hard shading: hands. Hands can be a very intimidating and difficult subject to draw, but we'll be going through the process step-by-step, so once you're finished, you'll know what's needed to paint a convincing hand, then be able to apply the techniques to other limbs.



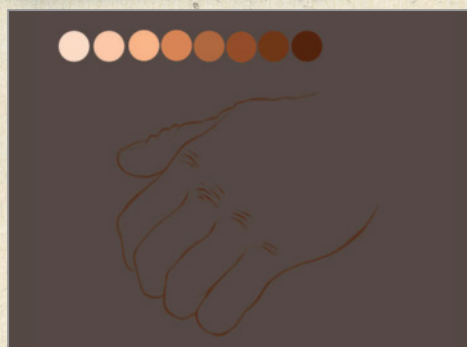
FINGERS

Fingers can be fiddly to draw. But if you block them out as rectangles in the sketching stage, you may have an easier time piecing them together.



Sketch the limb

01 It helps to draw your limb of choice first before getting started with painting. In this case, we'll be working with the most dreaded of limbs: hands! Try drawing a square with four rectangles poking out the top – this makes the process a lot easier.



Line art and colour

02 Select one of your darker browns from your palette, create a new layer, and use a soft brush to draw a refined version of your sketch. When you're done, create a layer beneath that, and use a large hard brush to colour in the skin with a midtone shade.



Paint in the shading

03 Select a darker skin tone, a soft brush set to 25% Opacity and Multiply, and paint in some shadows. Switch back to the midtone and turn off Multiply to blend the darker strokes. Try to make your shadows soft in curved areas, and harder in darker areas.



Paint in the highlights

04 Set your brush to 20% Opacity. Select a hue lighter than the midtone, and paint in highlights on the back of the hand, knuckles and fingers. The back of the hand is a broad surface, so make the light soft. Conversely, make the highlight on the knuckles stark.

Create depth in your portraits

The key to creating depth in any painting is contrasting colours. Be sure to decide on a light source before you begin painting, so you'll know where to shade the face. Consider whether the skin is taught or soft; cheeks should be shaded gently, but shadows cast beneath the brow are typically sharp. Try setting up a light nearby you, and looking at yourself in a mirror – if there are no other options, use yourself as reference!



Photosh.



12 PRACTICAL PAINTING PROJECTS



TEXTURED BRUSHES

Make sure you use textured brushes when you start to paint your tree bark. They can be very effective in providing a realistic look.

HOW TO PAINT FOLIAGE

When it comes to painting landscapes, capturing the natural look and feel of your chosen subject is of vital importance. Using the same brushes and painting techniques you use for painting skin may not be so effective when used to create a tree – it

could end up looking like plastic! So you need to venture into a different brush set and way of working.

Textured brushes really come in handy for painting any type of foliage; it lends a more natural look to your work with no

need for any extra effort on your part. We'll be using brushes from Photoshop's default brush packs in this tutorial, but if you've found textured and/or leaf brushes online that you think might work better, feel free to give them a go!

Leaves

Leaves can be trickier than complete trees, especially when considering lighting. Stick to using textured brushes to give a natural feel. Remember that most leaves are translucent; this can be ignored when painting large masses of leaves, but shouldn't be overlooked when painting individual leaves.



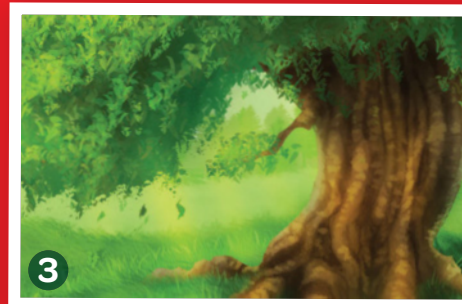
Grass

To make your own grass brush, select the Pencil Thin brush in the Natural Brushes 2 pack, and go to Brush Settings. Under Brush Tip Shape, change the Roundness to 30%. Up Spacing to 10%. Turn on Scattering, set it to 85%, and turn on Color Dynamics, too. This will set the brush to scatter long, thin shapes as you paint.



Trees

Leaf scatter brushes are great for big clumps of leaves. Try the Falling Ivy Leaves brush (from the Special Effects pack) with Color Dynamics switched on. For the trunk, use the Oil Medium to Large Tip brush found in the Wet Media Pack; go to Brush Settings>Transfer, and set Opacity Jitter to be controlled by Pen Pressure.

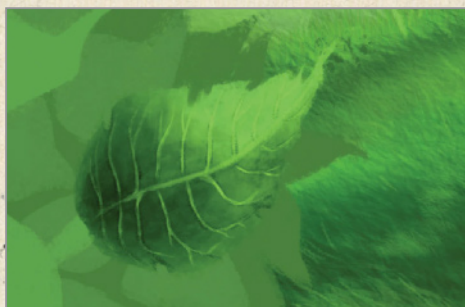


7. LEAVES



Paint the basic shape

01 Using a midtone green with medium saturation, use a textured brush set to Multiply, 30% Opacity to paint the basic shape of a leaf: a pinched teardrop shape. Create two layers underneath, and paint smaller, darker leaves on those, to make a leafy bush.



Paint in details

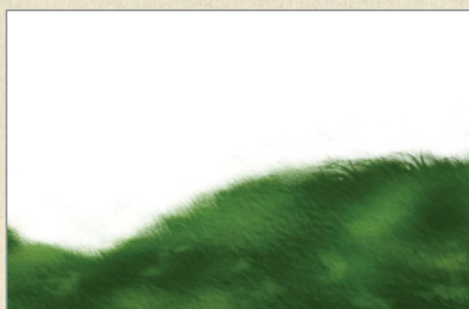
02 Shrink your textured brush to 20px or less, with a high Opacity (70-85%). Draw in the veins using a dark green first, then go over it with a green-yellow to give them depth. Use the Eraser tool, set to your textured brush, to taper and cut into the edges of the leaves.



Lighting and translucency

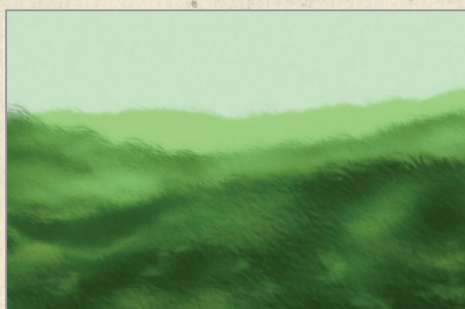
03 To make leaves look translucent, create a new layer above the leaf layer, right-click it and select Create Clipping Mask. Set the layer to Overlay, select a white-yellow, and paint with the Airbrush. This will make the leaf look saturated, and ever so slightly see-through.

8. GRASS



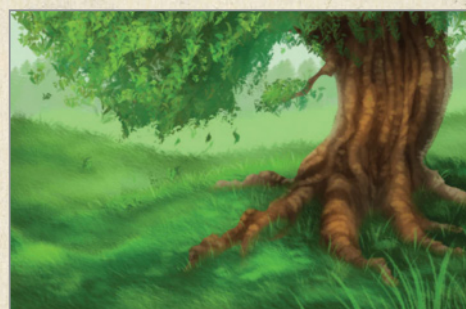
Paint dark hues first

01 A general painting rule of thumb is to lay down midtones first, but with grass, it's easiest to lay down the darkest hue first, and paint the lighter hues over it. Put your grass brush (150-200px) to the test, select a rich dark green, and paint the shape of a hill.



Fade out

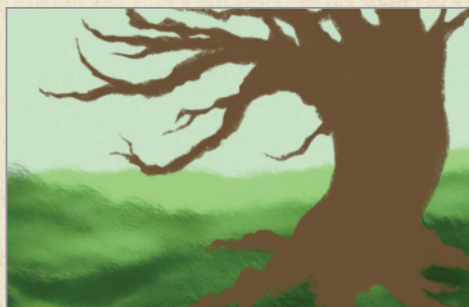
02 Create a new layer beneath, and select a lighter, less saturated green. With a smaller brush (100-150px), paint in another hill behind the foreground. Repeat until you have a grassy horizon fading out. The lighter greens will help give a sense of depth.



Contrast and lighting

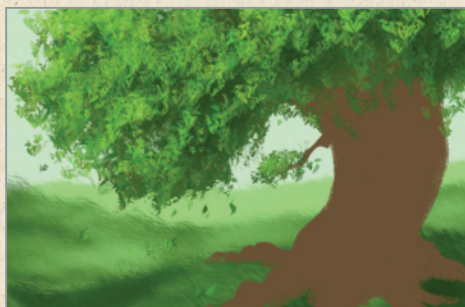
03 On the foreground layer, select a large grass brush, set it to Multiply with 40% Opacity, and paint in some shadows around and behind the tree. Do the same for lighter areas by selecting a light, desaturated green, and setting the brush to Overlay.

9. TREES



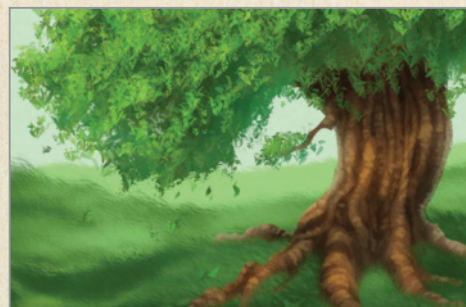
Direct the tree

01 It's useful to start by sketching out which 'direction' your tree will be going in. Trees don't always stand straight up; giving them a slanted trunk will make your tree look more organic, and erratic shapes in the branches are only natural.



Paint along the branches

02 This is where painting the branches first really comes in handy: create a new layer, and use a textured brush and a dark green to paint in the first layer of leaves. Keep painting over this with gradually lighter greens to create a layered look with depth.



Add textures and light

03 Using a brown colour and textured brush set to Multiply, 30% Opacity, paint sinewy shapes down the trunk. When done, combine tree layers, and select the Eraser tool with your textured brush. Erase part of the roots so the grass covers them.

10. CLOUDS

Clouds come in all shapes and sizes, so there is technically no one right way of drawing them. From detailed and naturalistic clouds to expressive and cartoony ones, there are many ways to interpret them. However, there are certain similarities, and using these guidelines will make them look convincing. You don't need specialised cloud custom brushes; you can actually paint great clouds just by using the Airbrush tool!



EXPERT TIP

Experiment with colour

If you've just been painting clouds using white and grey, you've been wasting potential! If you look at clouds you'll see a glorious range of colours! Clouds can be purple, yellow, red and orange. Use different coloured clouds to add to the mood of your scenes.



1. ESTABLISH THE SHAPE

On a separate layer, paint in the main cloud shapes with the Airbrush. Use midtone colours and shape them to fit the mood. Flat clouds add an air of calm; billowing clouds add drama!

2. ADD THE DARKEST SHADING

Clouds are convincing when they feel like they have depth and mass; pick the darkest colour you're using to start broadly adding heavy shadow on the underside of the clouds.

4. FINISHING TOUCHES

Make the bottom of the clouds slightly lighter, simulating the light moving under them. Use gradients on an Overlay layer to make colours richer. Apply either a Gaussian Blur or Motion Blur for movement.

3. ADD HIGHLIGHTS

Reduce the size of your Airbrush and start defining the shape of the clouds with lighter colours where the sunlight hits them. Reduce your brush size further and use even lighter colours for rim lighting.

1. CREATE THE BACKGROUND

Grab the Gradient tool and open the editor. Enter the colours: #8ccced, #2d8d9d, #ead5b6 and click OK. Hold Shift and drag from top to bottom.

2. PAINT THE WAVES

Grab the Brush tool. Hit F5 and pick a custom brush. Adjust the Shape Dynamics and Scattering. Change the Size and Spacing. Now paint the water surface and waves using light/dark values.



3. ADD FOAM AND CREST

Hit F5 and select the Foam brushes. Resize, choose a white colour and paint the foam over the water surface. Now select the Crest brushes and paint on top of the waves texture.

11. WATER

Water reflects the sky and depending on which way the waves or the water surface move, it creates different colour values. To paint a seascape, use a set of custom wave brushes, such as the 'Ocean Brushes.abr' available on the FileSilo, and start painting the sea using light and dark values. To create the wave texture, use a dark colour and for the water surface use a mix of light and dark values. Change the Brush Painting mode to create different stroke values.



EXPERT TIP

Build up waves

You will find that there are many colour nuances when painting water. For example, depending on the position of the sun, a wave can have a strong shadow. Add a dark blue at the base of the wave and then gradually lighten it up as you move to the top of the crest.

12. FIRE

One of the easiest techniques to paint fire is using the brush Painting Mode to create different colour effects. Begin by grabbing a soft-tip brush, choose a base orange colour and begin painting a circular shape. Now start creating the lines to make the flame shape. When the flame base is completed, go on the Tool Option bar and change the Mode to Linear Dodge. Then start painting inside the flame; this will create a nice yellowish colour. To complete the flame, change the Mode to Color and paint the base; this will create a strong bright colour and give the impression of intense heat.

EXPERT TIP

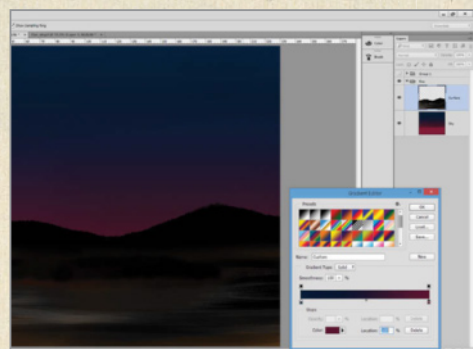
Flame generator filter

Photoshop CC has a very cool filter that creates realistic flames. You need to create a path first using the Pen tool or the Shapes tools. Then go to Filter>Render>Flame. On the dialog box change the settings to customise your flame in many ways.



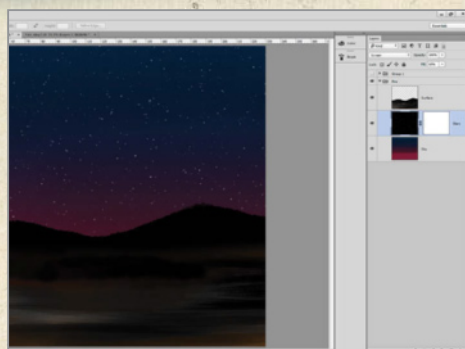
SHAPES

Think about the shapes you're creating when you go to paint fire. Remember to start with a circular shape and then draw lines for the flame shape.



Create the sky

01 Grab the Gradient tool and open the Gradient Editor. Set the first stop to a dark blue, and for the second stop use a reddish colour. Click OK. Hold Shift and drag from the top to bottom to create the sky. Paint the surface using a dark brown colour.



Create the stars

02 Create a new layer and then go to Filter>Pixelate>Mezzotint. Choose Coarse Dots and click OK. Apply a 5% Gaussian Blur. Open the Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L) and adjust the inputs to create the stars. Change the blending mode to Screen.



Paint the fire

03 Create a new layer. Grab the Brush tool (B). Choose a large soft brush. Set the Foreground colour to orange (#d2691b). Paint the flame shape. Change the Brush Painting Mode to Linear Dodge and paint over the flame. Change the Mode to Color and paint the base.



Add glow

04 First apply a 5% Gaussian Blur over the flame. Create a new layer and drag it behind the flame layer. Use a large soft-tip brush. Set the Painting Mode to Normal. Choose a bright orange colour and paint around the flame. Paint the rocks to complete your work.

Create depth in your landscapes

Here are some tips to create depth in your landscape image. Be sure to vary the size of objects - paint smaller trees as they get further away and increase the size of the foliage and grass as they get closer. Create a winding river or a subtle curve path; this will help to move the viewer's eye into and around your image. Add an interesting foreground image, such as flowers or other elements to give a sense of depth to your image.





Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

▲ How to use the Puppet Warp tool and basic adjustment techniques



Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Daniel Sinoca



"I love to use the Puppet Warp to modify images. The pins let me control specific areas and even let me overlap the image to create an amazing effect. I started to get involved in the digital world more than 10 years ago and have been working as a freelance artist ever since, creating all kinds of multimedia projects and tutorial guides."

Use adjustments for creative edits

Create a fun composition using Puppet Warp and adjustment layers

Whether you're an advanced Photoshop user or just getting started, there is always something new to learn in Photoshop. In this tutorial we'll demonstrate how to use the Puppet Warp tool to transform an image. You'll learn how this tool can be very handy and versatile to create realistic distortions.

Every time you work with compositions there are some techniques that always seem to come into

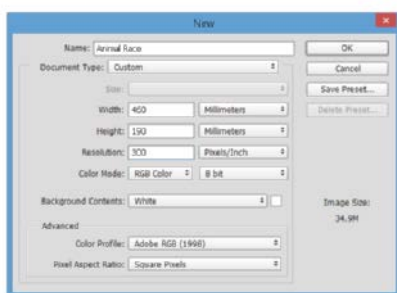
play. One of the most useful is layer masks, and another is adjustment layers. Layer masks enable you to hide and show areas of a layer without affecting the original image. Adjustment layers enable you to enhance colours, make tonal corrections and much more. These techniques, used in combination with other tools and filters, really do give you the foundation needed to create amazing artwork, and we show you how here.



Start images

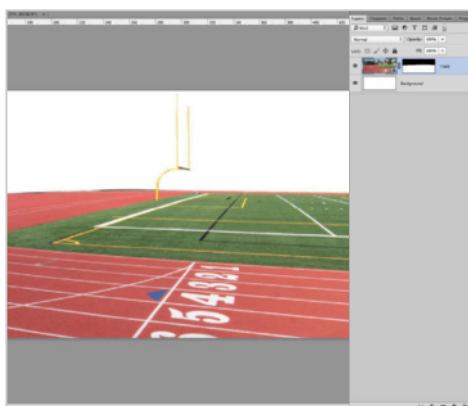
On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative



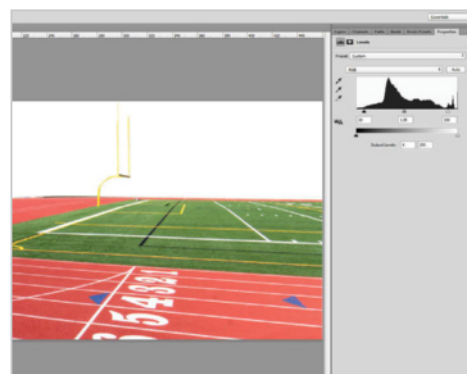
Create a blank file

01 Create a new document. Go to File>New (Cmd/Ctrl+N) and name your project Animal Race. Now set the Width to 460mm, Height to 190mm and Resolution to 300ppi. Confirm this by clicking OK.



Make the background

02 Go to File>Place Embedded 'Track.jpg'. Resize to approximately 120% and hit Return/Enter. Now it is time to create a mask. Grab the Pen tool (P) and draw a path around the track. On the Option bar click Make: Selection, then click OK. Now go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection.



Adjust the tones

03 To adjust the tones go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Adjust the Input Levels to 20, 1.05 and 230. Now go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Set the Saturation to +10.

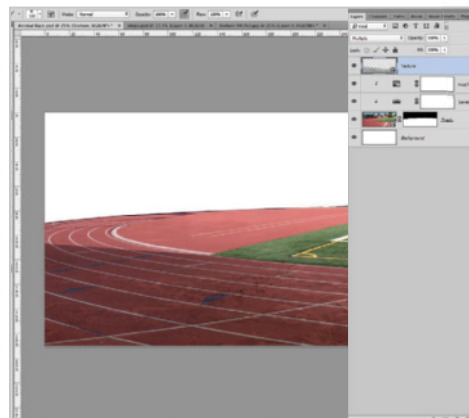


Expert tip



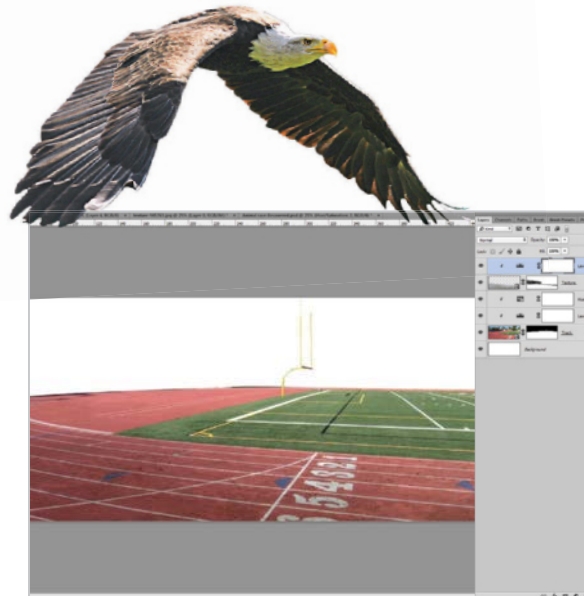
Make adjustments

Use adjustments to make tonal corrections and change the appearance of the image. The Vibrance adjustment enhances colours without over-saturating. Color Balance will help you correct the colour cast in the image. Levels adjusts the shadows, midtones and highlights, and also balances the colours. The Brightness/Contrast adjustment will change the overall brightness and contrast values in the image. Each image is unique, so try different adjustments.



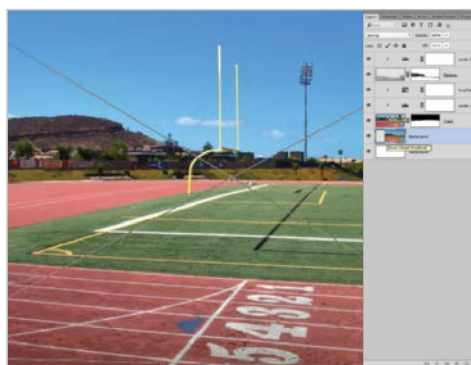
Add textures

04 Go to File>Place Embedded 'Texture.jpg'. Drag the top handles to place the texture over the track, then hit Return/Enter. Now change the blending mode for the layer to Multiply.



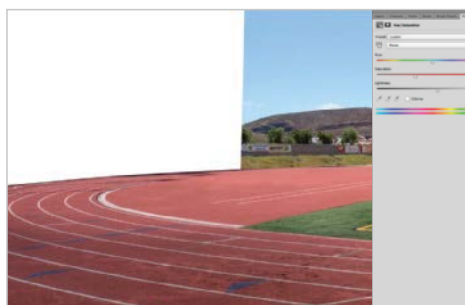
Create a mask

05 Visit Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab a large, soft-tip brush (B) and hide the hard edges. Now create an adjustment layer. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Adjust the Input Levels to 0, 1.20 and 220.



Add a new image

06 Let's add a new image to create a nice background. Go to File>Place Embedded 'Background.jpg'. Move the image to the right and hit Return/Enter. Drag the layer and place it behind the Track layer.



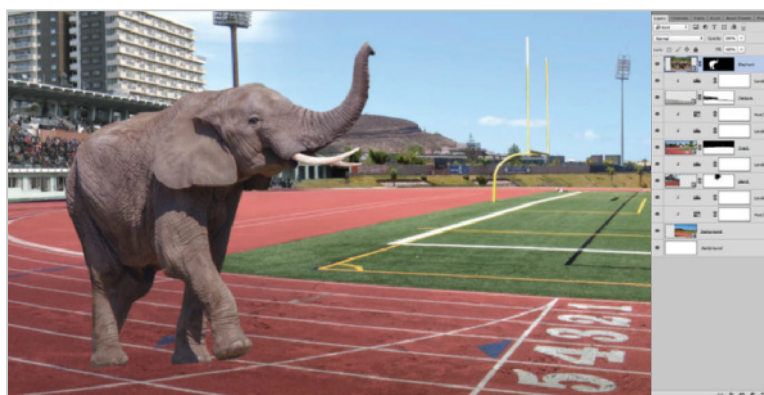
Make adjustments

07 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Set the Saturation: -30 and Lightness: +10. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Set the Inputs to 35, 1.70 and 240.



Complete the background

08 Go to File>Place Embedded 'Stand.jpg', hit Return/Enter. Adjust the Levels. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Set Input Levels to 10, 1.40 and 255. Add a layer mask and hide the hard edges to blend the images.



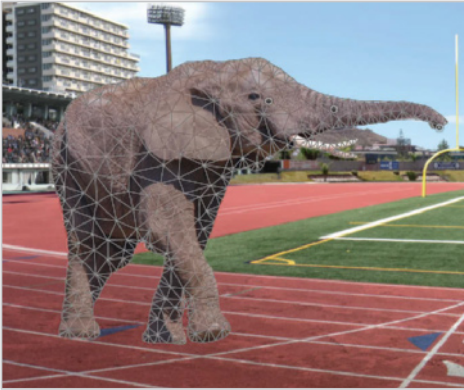
Place the elephant

09 Go to File>Place Embedded 'Elephant.jpg' on top of the layer stack and hit Return/Enter. Zoom in and grab the Pen tool (P). Draw a path around the elephant. On the Option bar click Make: Selection. Set Feather Radius to 1 pixels and click OK. Now go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection.



Apply the layer mask

10 First go to Layer>Rasterize>Layer. Now duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J), then go to Layer>Layer Mask>Apply. Hide the Elephant layer by clicking on the 'eye' icon in the Layers palette. In the next step we'll create some distortions to add a sense of motion to the elephant.



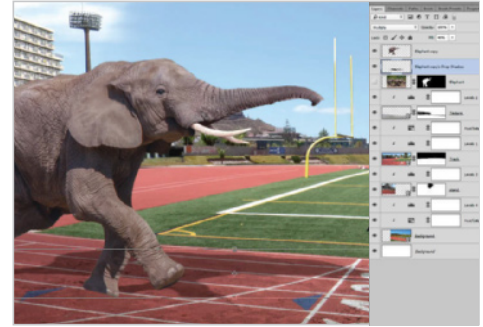
Use the Puppet Warp tool

11 Now go to Edit>Puppet Warp. Add a few pins, the first one going next to the eye, the second going in the centre of the trunk, and the third going on the tip. Now drag down the pin located on the tip to straighten the trunk.



Make more distortions

12 Add more pins. Add three pins on the back leg, three on the front-right leg, one under the ear, and another on the front-left leg. Drag the pins, raising the legs to give the impression that the elephant is running. Now hit Return/Enter.



Add shadows

13 Go to Layer>Layer Style>Drop Shadow. Set Opacity: 40%, Angle: 90, Distance: 10, Spread: 1% and Size: 15, then hit OK. Now go to Layer>Layer Style>Create Layer. Click on the Elephant Copy's drop shadow layer and hit Cmd/Ctrl+T. Hold Cmd/Ctrl and drag the centre handle to create a nice perspective.



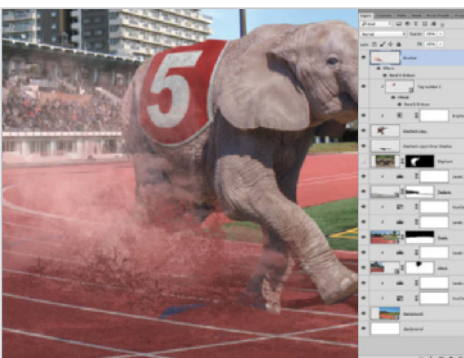
Adjust brightness and contrast

14 Let's adjust the brightness and contrast. Click on the 'Elephant copy layer', then go to Layer>New Adjustment layer>Brightness/Contrast. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Set the Brightness to 30 and the Contrast to -10.



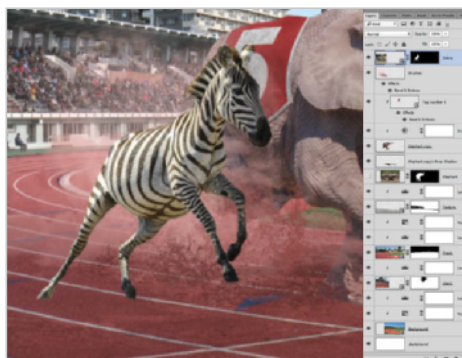
Place the tag number

15 Go to File>Place 'Tag number.png'. Resize it and hit Return/Enter. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+G to clip the layer. Now go to Edit>Transform>Warp. Drag the handles to re-shape the image. Go to Layer>Layer Style>Bevel and Emboss. Adjust the settings to create a subtle 3D effect.



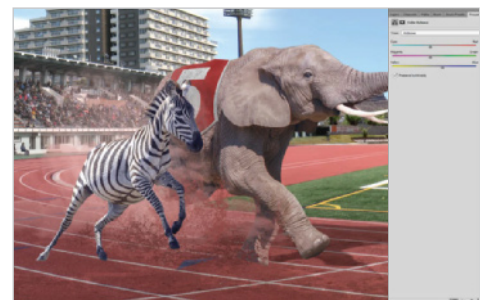
Load the custom brushes

16 Go to Edit>Preset>Preset Manager and load 'Brushes_133.abr'. Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N) and name it Brushes. Grab the Brush tool (B). Hit F5 and select the brushes to add the dust. Pick a light or dark colour, similar to the track colour.



Place the zebra

17 Head to File>Place 'Zebra.jpg' on top of the layer stack. Grab the Pen tool (P) and create a path around the zebra. Click Make: Selection. Set Feather Radius to 0.5 pixels and click OK. Now add the layer mask. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection.

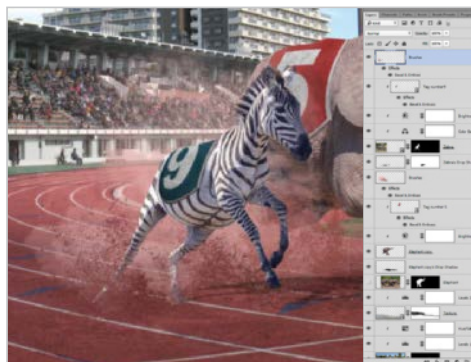


Correct the colour

18 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Color Balance. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Set Tone: Midtones, Cyan/Red: -10, Magenta/Green: -10 and Yellow/Blue: +20. Now add the Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer. Clip the layers and set Brightness: 20 and Contrast: -50.

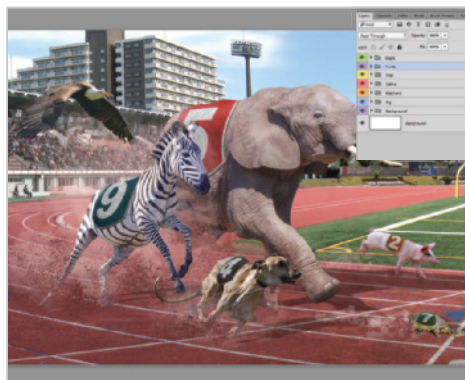


Tutorial Use adjustments for creative edits



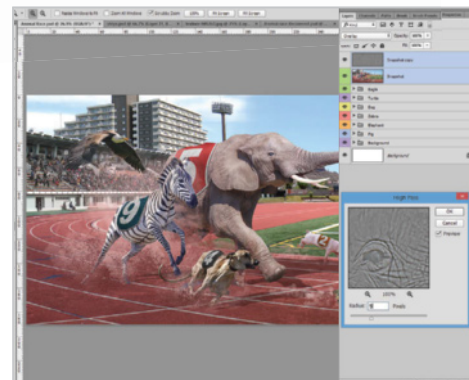
Add shadows

19 Repeat step 13 to create the shadow, but now set the layer's Opacity to 30%. Add a layer mask (Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All). Hide the zebra's shadows over the elephant paws. Now add the tag number as you did in step 15 and the dust brushes as in step 16.



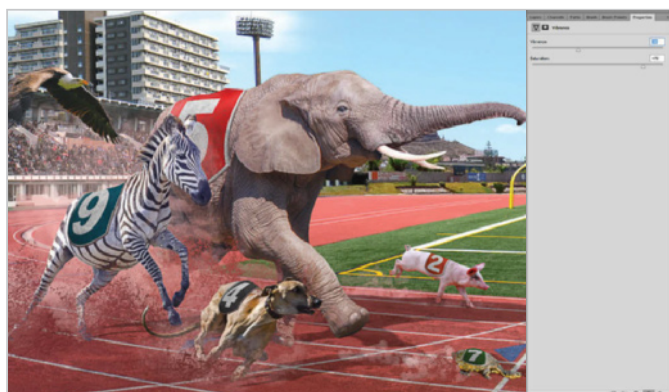
Place the other animals

20 Place the other animals using the steps you've just learned. Add shadows and masks, and make the adjustments. Each image is unique, so experiment with different settings until you're happy with the results.



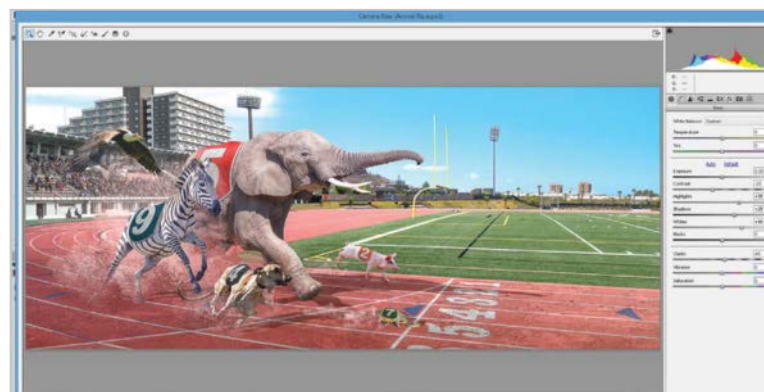
Sharpen the image

21 Click on the top layer of the layer stack, then hit Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+E to create a snapshot. Now duplicate the image and change the blend mode for the layer to Overlay. Go to Filter>Other>High Pass. Set the Radius to 5 pixels and click OK.



Merge the layers

22 Hold Shift and click over the Snapshot layer and the Snapshot copy. Now click Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge the layers. Name it Final. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Vibrance. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Set Vibrance: -30 and Saturation: +70.



Make final adjustments

23 Go to Layer>Smart Object>Convert to Smart Object. Head to Filter>Camera Raw filter. On the Basic panel, set Contrast: -20, Highlights: +35, Shadows: +25, Whites: +40 and Clarity: +5. Click on HSL/Grayscale panel and adjust the Luminance. Set Orange: +70, Yellows: +35, Greens: +30 and Blues: -20, then click OK.

Closer look

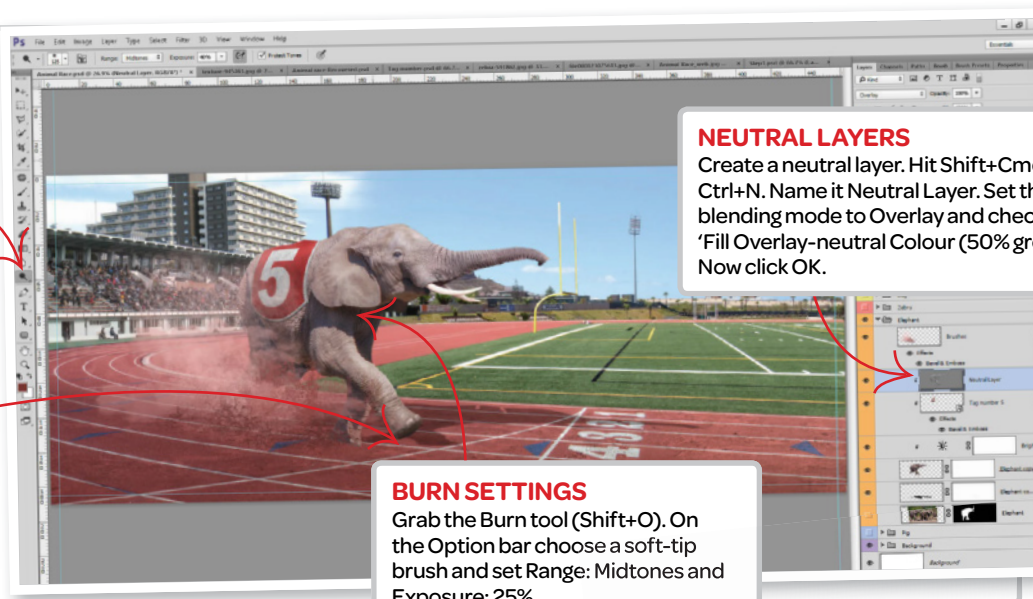
Add some shadows and highlights

ADD HIGHLIGHTS

Grab the Dodge tool (Shift+O). Set Range: Midtones and Exposure: 40%, then with a soft-tip brush, carefully paint in the highlights.

ADD SHADOWS

Use the Burn tool to paint the shadows under the paw and trunk, and also to enhance the existing shadows over the ears and face.



NEUTRAL LAYERS

Create a neutral layer. Hit Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N. Name it Neutral Layer. Set the blending mode to Overlay and check 'Fill Overlay-neutral Colour (50% grey)'. Now click OK.

BURN SETTINGS

Grab the Burn tool (Shift+O). On the Option bar choose a soft-tip brush and set Range: Midtones and Exposure: 25%.





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Essentials

Works with



Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

▲ How to use the Paint Bucket tool and Polygonal Lasso tool to draw



Time taken
3 hours

Expert

Andy Hau



"I've taken loads of selfies, but I've never drawn a self-portrait – this is my first. The low-poly style is incredibly forgiving, particularly for people like me with a potato-shaped face. You're forced to represent yourself with chiselled features. I am a London-based architect and graphic designer, as well as the owner of A.H.A. Design Ltd – a multidisciplinary design studio."

Draw a geometric portrait



Selfies are so 2012 – learn how to take your portraits into a completely new dimension

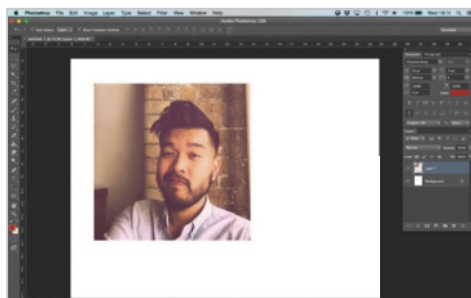
Flat design has been a huge design trend for the past few years. With its minimalist feel and restrictive use of stylistic elements, flat design conveys information quickly while remaining visually appealing and approachable. With Apple, Microsoft and Google all adopting flat design in their user interfaces, as well as their branding, it's safe to say that the flat approach is here to stay.

However, tired of the ubiquitous style, there is a growing trend among illustrators to try and bring some dimensionality back into digital imagery – to resurrect the notion of tactility, while managing to retain the simplicity and approachability that flat

design embodies. Thus, the low-poly style entered the graphics world.

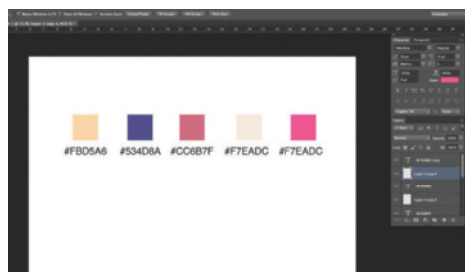
Low poly is a geometric style that strips three-dimensional elements down to a small number of polygons. Traditionally used in 3D graphics, we are going to re-create this style using Photoshop for a portrait of a completely random, but very good-looking, stranger (okay, it's me).

Joking aside, everyone looks great as a geometric portrait, thanks to the chiselled lines and perfect symmetry. The best bit is that no 3D software or skills are required – all you need is the Polygonal Lasso tool and a good eye.



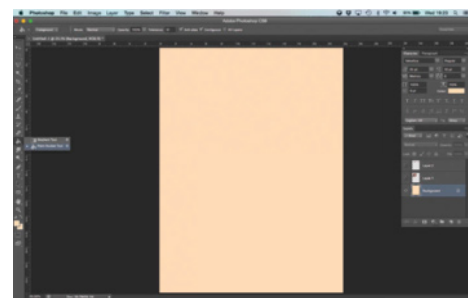
Find a reference image

01 Unless you're using a sitting subject, you need a reference image – a smartphone selfie is perfect. You can either use this image to trace from or, as we have done here, you can use the image as a reference. Download the photo used in this tutorial from the FileSilo.



Choose a colour palette

02 Select the colours to use. This image has an underexposed, light-leak feel and uses #FBD5A6 (skin), #534D8A (hair, beard, waistcoat, eyes), #CC6B7F (light leaks), #F7EADC (shirt) and #EE5692 (bow tie, pocket square). From this main colour palette, we can establish our highlights and darker tones used for shading.

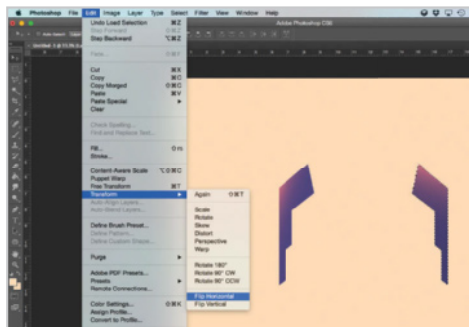


Lay the background

03 Keep the background as plain as possible to retain a clean feel. This image uses a pale peach colour (#FEDCB7) to intensify the underexposed light-leak aesthetic of the image. Select the Paint Bucket tool (G) and fill in the entire layer with your chosen background colour.

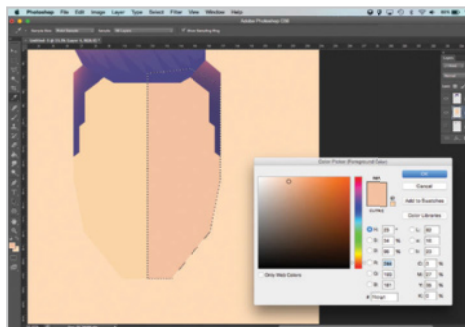


Tutorial Draw a geometric portrait



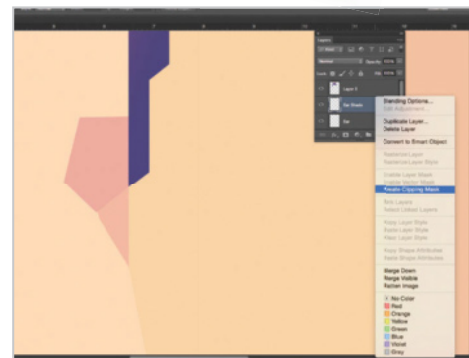
Grow the hair

04 Use the Polygonal Lasso tool (L) to create the hair. Keep the lines straight and use as few changes in direction as you can. Fill the boundary with a Gradient (G). Make a copy of the hair layer and mirror it (Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal). Fill it with a darker shade.



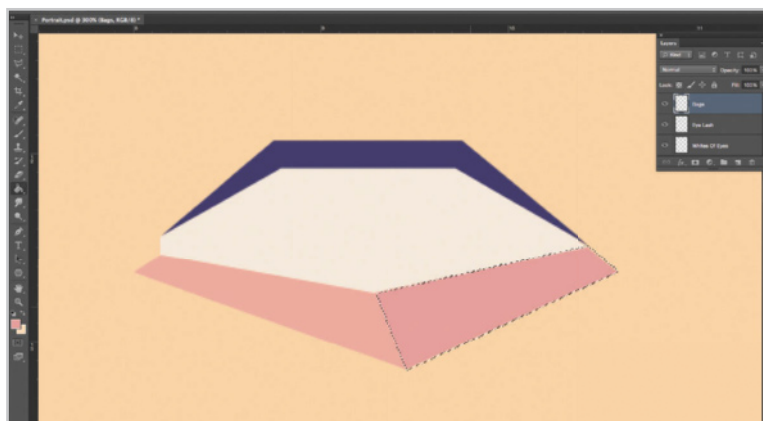
Create the face

05 Create a new layer underneath the hair layer and create half of the face with the Polygonal Lasso tool (L). Fill the boundary with the skin colour using the Paint Bucket tool (G). Make a copy of the face layer and mirror it (Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal). Fill it with a darker shade.



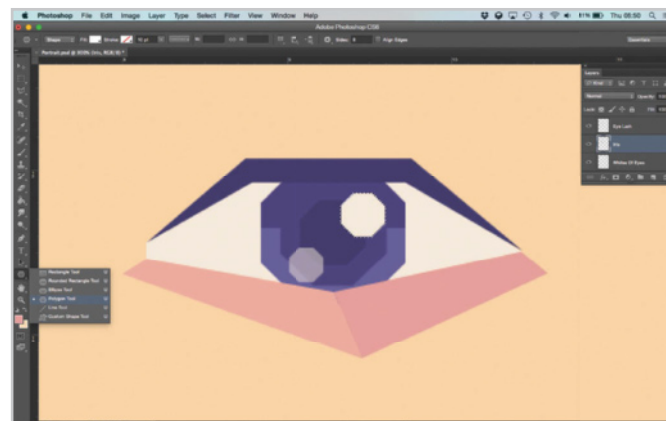
Make the ears

06 Create the ears on a new layer using the previous method. For the shading on the ears, create a fill with the skin shade colour on a new layer. Place the shade layer above the ear layer, right-click on the shade layer and select Create Clipping Mask.



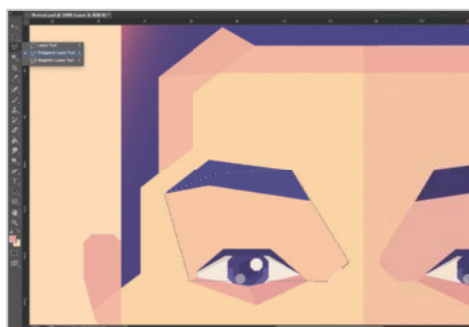
Form the eyes and eyebrows

07 Now you need to create the eyebrows and upper lashes with the Polygonal Lasso tool (L) and the Paint Bucket tool (G). On a new layer under the lashes layer, create the whites of the eyes. Finally, on a new layer above the lashes layer, create the 'bags' under the eyes using darker skin colours.



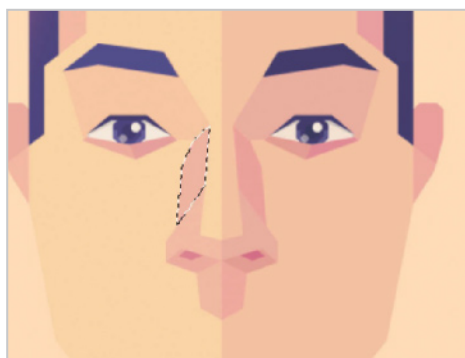
Perfect the irises

08 Select the Polygon tool (U) and change the Sides to 8 to create the irises. Select the layers that contain the iris elements, right-click on the Layers panel and select Merge Layers. Place the iris layer above the whites of the eyes layer and create a clipping mask as above.



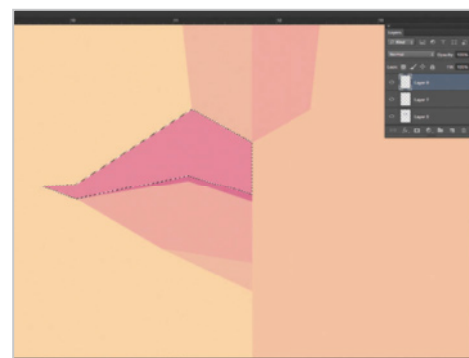
Contour the face

09 Create a 3D feel by contouring the face. On the forehead, just next to the hairline, create areas of shade using the Polygon Lasso tool (L) and Paint Bucket tool (G). Use the darkest colour for areas furthest away and the lightest colour for the areas closest to you.



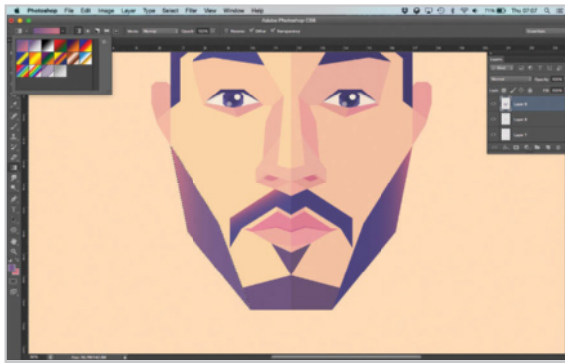
Create the nose

10 The nose is critical for likeness (which is why some people who have bad nose jobs look completely unrecognisable). Using your new contouring skills from the previous step, create the nose as areas of light and shade.



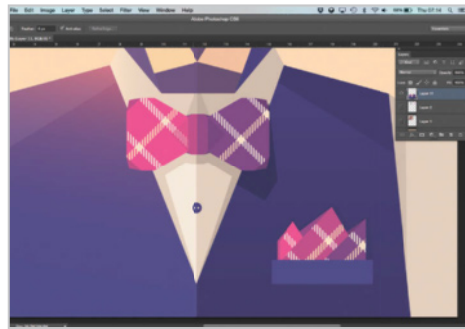
Make a mouth

11 Create the mouth using the Polygon Lasso tool (L) and Paint Bucket (G). A slight upturn at the edges of the mouth will make your subject seem less stern. Separate the two lips with an area of shade to create fullness.



Add facial hair

12 Using the same colour as the hair, create the beard with the Polygonal Lasso tool (L). The beard will define the cheekbones and chin to give further dimensionality to the face. Those of you who don't have a beard can change the areas under the cheekbones to areas of shade.



Dress your portrait

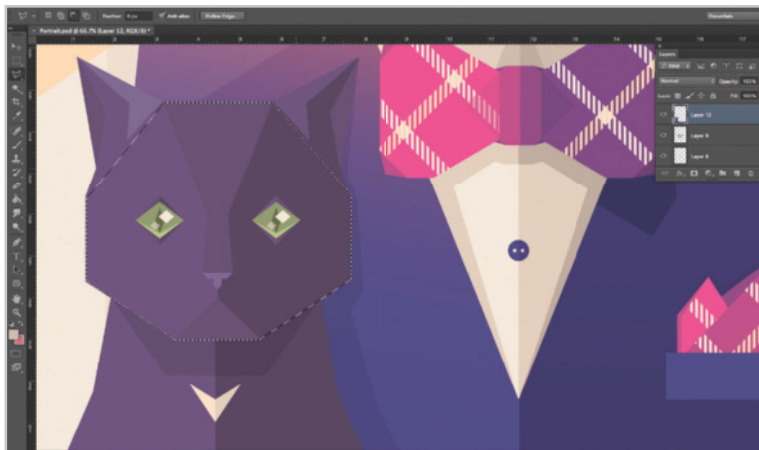
13 Using all the techniques you've learnt from creating the face, create your outfit using a combination of the Polygonal Lasso tool (L), Paint Bucket (G) and clipping masks. Subtle shadows under the areas where pieces of clothing overlap will create depth and fullness.

Expert tip



Perfect symmetry

Most of us don't have symmetrical faces. This is an issue when creating geometric portraits, because you either have to sacrifice likeness or you end up trying to adjust one side, which ruins the purity of the image. To counter this, once you have got the main components ready, remove your reference image and use instinct to locate the features. You'll get a more natural-looking portrait and a better likeness.



Introduce a pet

14 The techniques in this tutorial work for animals too! The trick is to break down the facets and identify where the polygons are. For example, the cat's head is basically an abstracted hexagon and his ears are pure triangles, which have been contoured with light and shade.



Zoom out

15 Zoom out using Cmd/Ctrl+O so the entire image fits onto your screen and check you are happy with the overall composition of the image. Everything should look balanced and the elements and colours should be evenly distributed.

What you can do with it

Use it online

Tired of being an egg in your Twitter profile picture but every selfie of you on your phone looks like you're either in pain or about to sneeze? Don't worry – we've all been there! One benefit of this tutorial is that geometric portraits are a great way to show the world what you look like and your artistic talent without actually revealing the real you, making them the perfect profile picture. Many social-media sites will crop your picture for you, which can be unpredictable. Instead, crop the image yourself to get the perfect fit.



On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative

Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

▲ How to harness the power of Adobe's apps to edit your photos



Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Mark White



"It really excites me to see Adobe's technology moving towards mobile. You can use Color CC, for example, when you're out and about: if you see a beautiful view, you can recreate the mood of it later. As senior staff writer on **Photoshop Creative**, I've learned all kinds of quick tips to help with even the most impressive-looking pictures."

Add atmosphere with Color CC

Use a tablet and Adobe's Color CC app to create colour palettes for your photo projects

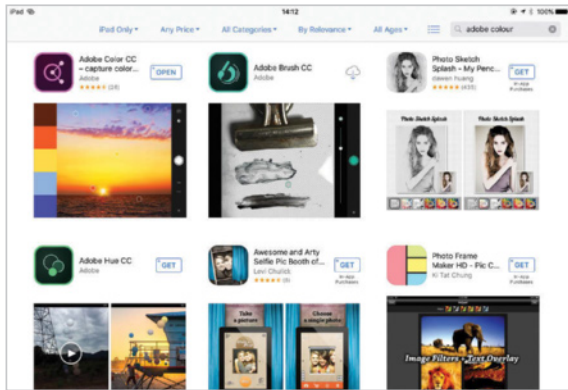
The last year has seen even more advancement from Adobe in the app market, as technology moves away from the desktop and into the pocket. Color CC is a particularly interesting app when you combine the possibilities of colour capture with creative photo-editing. Color allows you to take a picture and pick a colour palette from it, so if you can create colour themes, you can import these hues into Creative Cloud and recolour your snaps in the desktop version of Photoshop. Turning any daytime

landscape into a moody sunset is a fun photo-editing project to get creative with, but if you could pick colours from a sunset to recolour your daytime picture with, you could recreate a whole new atmosphere.

Using an on-the-go app to help with your photo editing is perhaps the future of Photoshop. This is a tutorial that you can try out with reference images that you've captured on your travels; after all, the CC apps are all about keeping creative no matter where you are.



Start image



Download the app

01 Open 'eilean-donan-castle-650681.jpg' in Photoshop on your desktop from the FileSilo, ready to use when you get to step 9. Download Adobe Color CC to your tablet. Just as with the other Adobe apps, Color is free to download, but you must be a CC member to upload what you create to your library.



Experiment

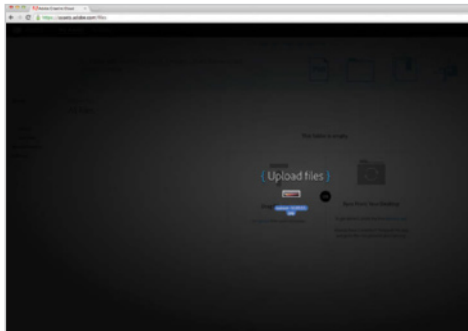
02 Just as you probably do when you download any new app, experiment with Color until you get the hang of how it works. Use the Camera option to discover its capabilities. Color simply picks five colours from its viewfinder to form a palette.

Expert tip



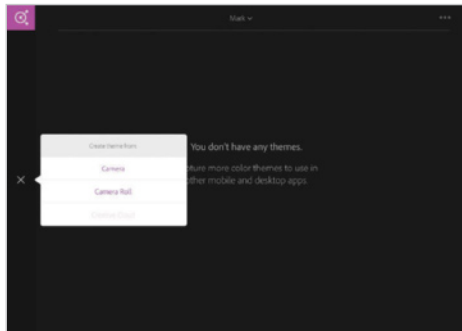
Coherent colours

The choice of colour is always a big decision in any creative project. When picking your colours in Color CC, the temptation is to just pick the brightest, most vibrant shades from the reference picture to replicate in your image. Instead of doing this though, think about the cohesion of your gradient; pick similar shades and colours, with one or two contrasting ones to produce a smoother finish to your edited sunset. This guarantees a better result.



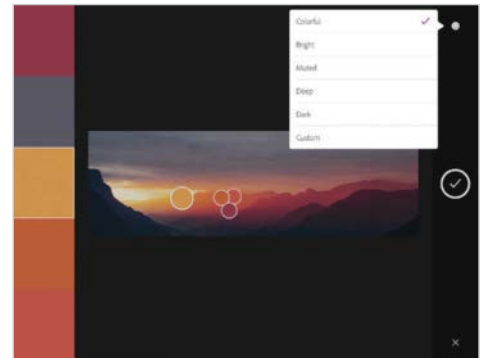
Upload a photo to CC

03 We're going to use a reference image to recolour another image, so the quickest way to get a reference image from your desktop onto your iPad is to upload it to CC. Go to assets.adobe.com/assets/libraries on your desktop in order to upload the image.



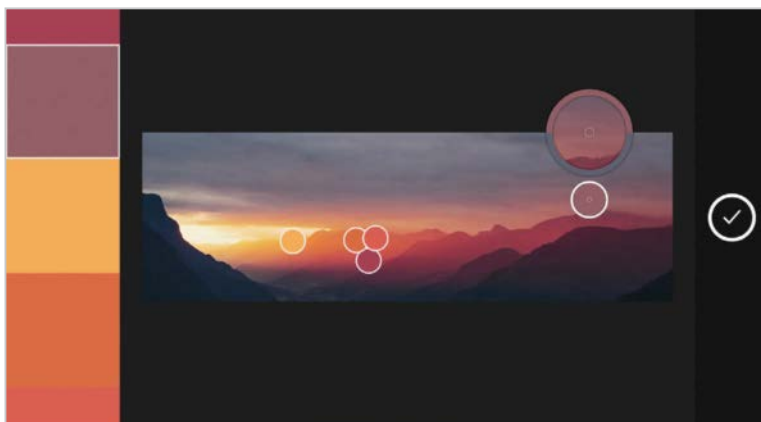
Create a theme

04 Back on your iPad, tap the '+' button on the left-hand side of the app to choose a picture. You might want to recolour the picture with a reference photo you've taken, or from your Camera Roll, but tap Creative Cloud to use the one you've just uploaded, and select it.



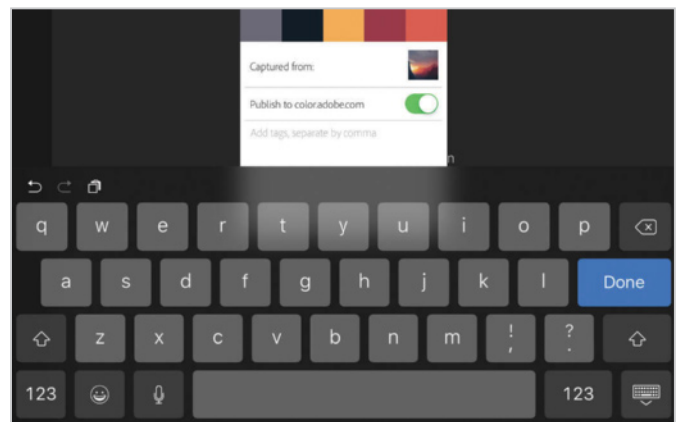
Pick a preset

05 The principle of Color is exactly the same when it's working from an uploaded image rather than through the camera viewfinder. Hit the smiley face in the top-right corner, and you can pick a preset based on your image.



Tweak the colours

06 With a preset picked, slide your finger across the iPad's surface to tweak the colour. This will give you more control over exactly what shades and hues you want to choose, and will let you perfect your colour palette.



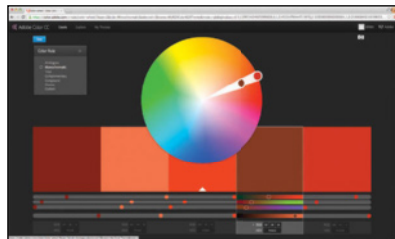
Save your theme

07 Once you're happy with your selection of colours, hit the tick and you'll be prompted to save your palette of colours. Name it, add tags if you'd like to find it later, and hit Save to store in your Creative Cloud library.



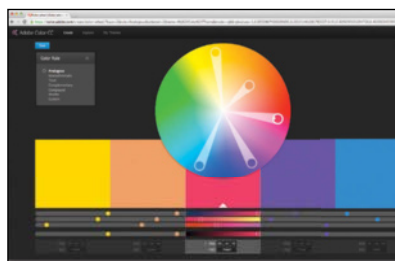
Expert edit

Use Color online



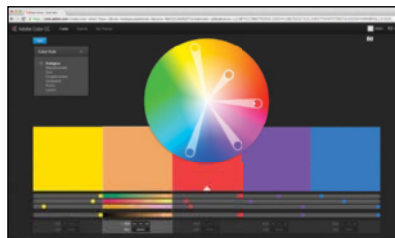
Choose Color Rule

01 Head to color.adobe.com and you can create your own colour palettes from Adobe's colour wheel. Choose a Color Rule to start with, which will set the basis for picking colours.



Drag your colours

02 Your central colour has an arrow next to it. Drag this to whichever hue you'd like, and drag the other four colours to form a palette.



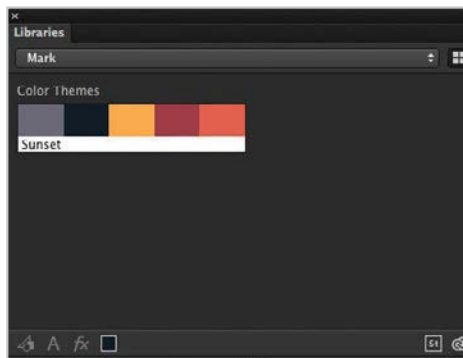
Tweak colours

03 Use the individual colour edits to adjust your shades. The colour rule you've chosen will alter each of the colours depending on how much you tweak one shade.



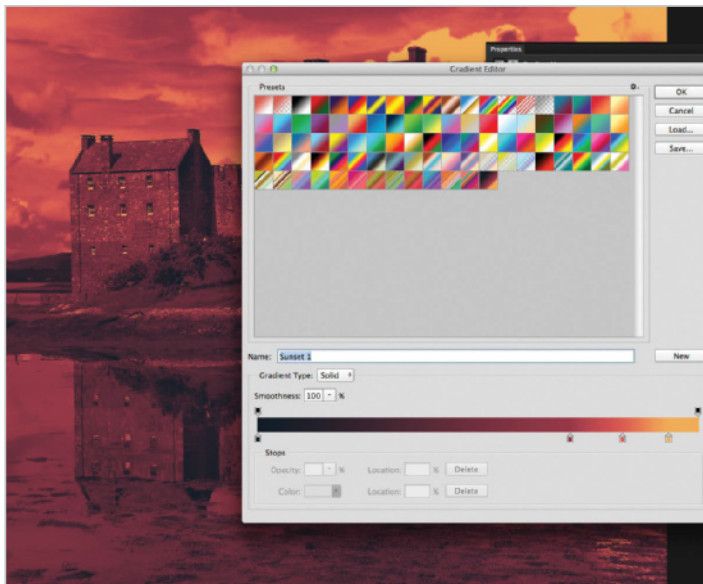
Use in Photoshop

04 You can't import your colours like you can in the CC app, but you can copy the hex codes and start creating with your chosen colour palette.



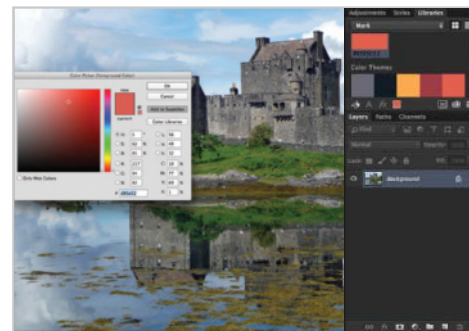
Load the theme

08 Go to the Libraries tab, which is situated on the right alongside the likes of Adjustments and Styles. Log in to your Creative Cloud account, and you'll be able to see the theme that you've just created. This theme will appear across any CC program or app.



Mask and blend

11 Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert the mask and hide the gradient map. With a big, soft, white brush of 20% Opacity, mask in the gradient's colours behind the castle, as if the sunset has descended in the scene. Masking the colours in keeps your editing subtle.

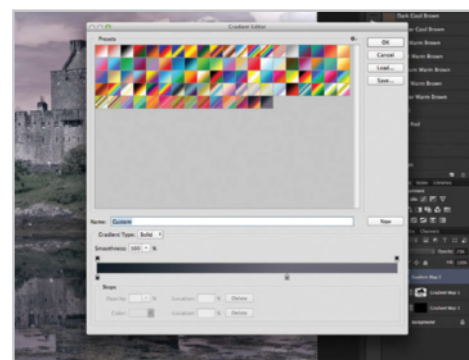


Add colours to swatches

09 Go back to 'eilean-donan-castle-650681.jpg' in Photoshop. Ctrl/right-click one of your colours in the Libraries panel and select Set Color, to set it as the Foreground colour. Click it in the Swatches, then hit Add to Swatches. Name it and do the same for the others, so you can refer back to them easily.

Create a gradient map

10 We're going to input the colours from the sunset reference image onto this daytime photo, so go to the Adjustments panel and choose Gradient Map. Load 'Sunset1.grd' from the FileSilo. This gradient uses the colours from your colour theme. Reduce the gradient map to 60% Opacity.



Add another gradient map

12 Add another Gradient Map adjustment layer and select the second gradient from the FileSilo, 'Sunset2.grd'. The grey and indigo will add a tint of darkness and balance out the strong reds and oranges from the sky in the picture.



Mask this gradient

13 Just as you masked the sunset into the picture, mask the greys and dark blues into the picture in much the same way, letting it fall on the castle and sections of the clouds that need a touch less vibrancy. Set the layer to Color, 75% Opacity.



Use gradient and filters

14 We're going to increase the intensity of the sunset now, by adding a new layer and dragging the red/yellow gradient across the picture from top to bottom. Set this to Multiply, 50% Opacity and then add a Photo Filter of 100% Density, set to the gold colour from your palette.



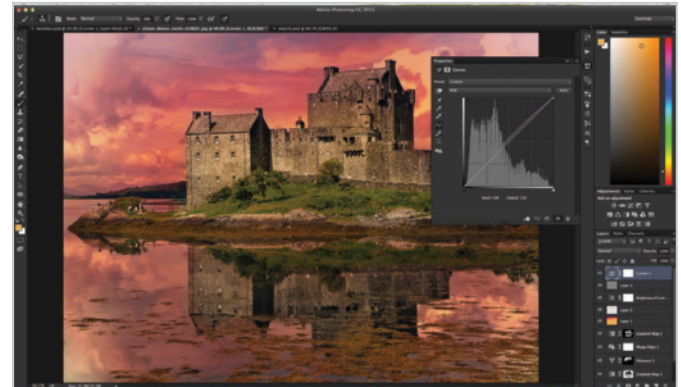
Backlight the castle

15 Now we are going to give the impression that the sunset is shining behind the castle by inserting a Vibrance adjustment of 100 between the gradient map layers. Get the same big, soft brush, and mask the Vibrance in.



Colour the castle

16 By backlighting the castle, we can retain the grey brickwork of the building, but add a new layer of 70%, set the blend mode to Color, and with your gold swatch, brush lightly over the castle to blend it in a little more with its background.



Finish with adjustments

17 Finally, touch up your picture slightly with adjustment layers. We've added a Brightness/Contrast of +10 for each, a subtle Curves layer to boost the red, green and blue channels and a High Pass filter. Use the supplied actions on the FileSilo to create these exact adjustments.

Closer look

Using Color on the go

The beauty of the Adobe apps is that you don't have to be at a desktop to create something, but Color is particularly useful when it comes to mobile creation. If you're out and there's a view that you particularly want to capture the colours from, you can use either a tablet or a smartphone to store the exact colours of the scene.

The app relies on an internet connection, either through mobile data or Wi-Fi, to enable you to save your colour themes. They can be temporarily saved on to the app without data for you to upload later, though.



CAPTURE SCENES ANYWHERE

Take the Color app with you in your pocket, by downloading it to your smartphone as well as your tablet.







On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative

Essentials

Works with



Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

How to use Calculation command and Levels for complex selections

Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Daniel Sinoca



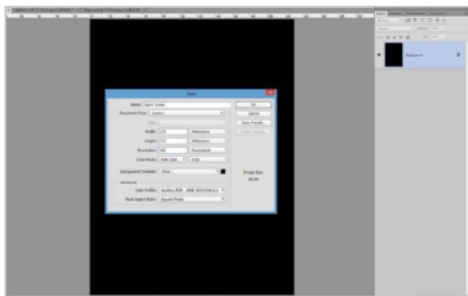
"The Calculation command is my favourite tool when I have to deal with complex masks. With just a few tweaks it is possible to speed up the entire process and get precise results. I started to get involved in the digital world more than 10 years ago and have been working as a freelance artist ever since, creating all kinds of multimedia projects and tutorial guides."

Inject drama with filters and more

Dramatise your sports photos with adjustment layers, special filters and the Calculation command

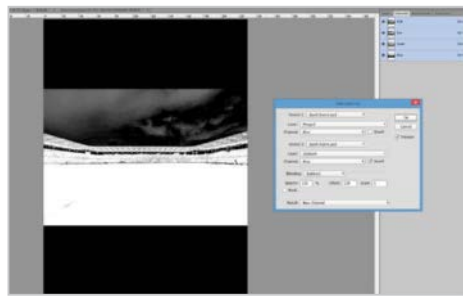
Photoshop has so many incredible tools to simplify complex processes and speed up the editing time. In this tutorial we're going to show you some neat tricks to achieve a dramatic effect using special commands and basic editing techniques. We will use the Calculation command to create a new channel mask. This command enables you to combine two different channels to create a high contrast layer to make a detailed mask or selection. You have to experiment with the different blending modes until you get a high contrast effect. Then we'll show you some easy

tricks to enhance the layer and create a new mask. You'll learn basic editing techniques, such as how to apply adjustment layers, clipping masks and custom brushes, and how to use the Pen tool to create accurate paths. In the final steps you'll work with some special filters to create a rain effect and sharpen the image. Creating a photocomposition in Photoshop is always challenging, but with just a little knowledge and creativity it is possible to achieve amazing results. Download the images and brushes from the FileSilo and don't forget to check the Expert Tip for extra advice.



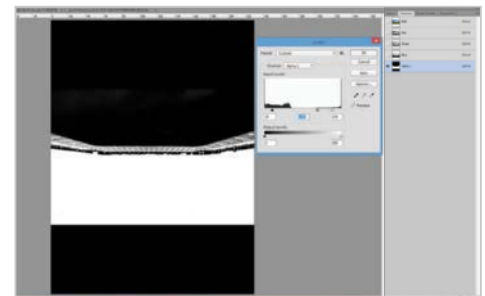
Set the scene

01 Create a new document. Go to File>New or hit Cmd/Ctrl+N. In the New window, enter the name Sport Scene and set the Width to 230mm, Height to 310mm and Resolution to 300ppi. Set the Background Contents to Black and then click OK.



Apply Calculation command

02 Go to File>Place Embedded 'Stadium.jpg'. Open the Channels palette (Window>Channels). Go Image>Calculations. Set the Source1 Channel to Blue. Change the Source2 Channel to Blue and check Invert. Set Blending to Subtract, Result to New Channel and click OK.



Improve the contrast

03 Enhance the contrast of the Alpha channel. Open the Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L), set the Input levels to 25, 0.40, 225 and click OK. Grab the Brush tool (B), choose a small, hard-tip brush, set the Foreground colour to white and paint the stadium seats to fill the gaps.

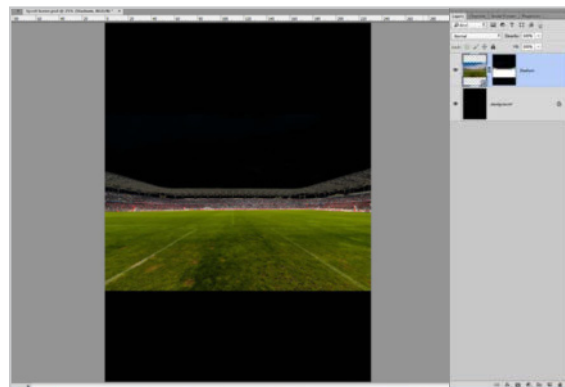


Expert tip



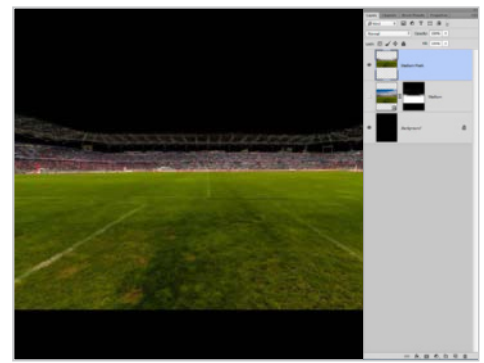
Get the wet look

Use the Plastic Wrap filter to create a wet look on the players. First, grab the Lasso tool and set the Feather to around 5 pixels. Now select a small area on the players' body, for example select just an arm. Go to Filter>Filter Gallery>Artistic>Plastic Wrap. Adjust the settings and hit OK. Now keep selecting small areas and press Cmd/Ctrl+F to re-apply the last filter. Creating small selections enables you to control which part will be affected by the filter.



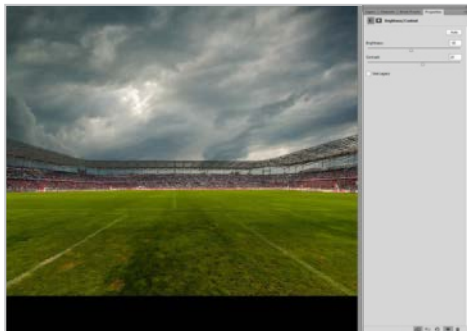
Create a mask

04 Select the RGB channel and then hit F7 to open up the Layers palette. Now go to Select>Load Selection. Choose Channel: Alpha, and set the Operation to New Selection and then click OK. Now you need to create a mask; go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection.



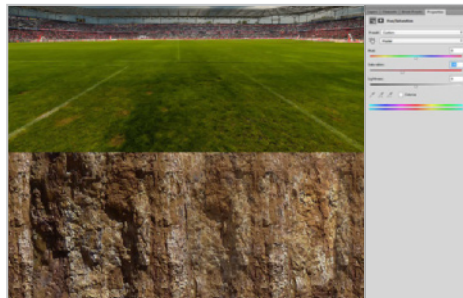
Enhance the layer

05 Duplicate the Stadium layer and hit Cmd/Ctrl+J. Name it Stadium Mask. Now go to Layer>Rasterize>Smart Object, then apply the mask by going to Layer>Layer Mask>Apply. Enhance the layer by going to Layer>Matting>Remove White Matte. Don't forget to hide the Stadium layer.



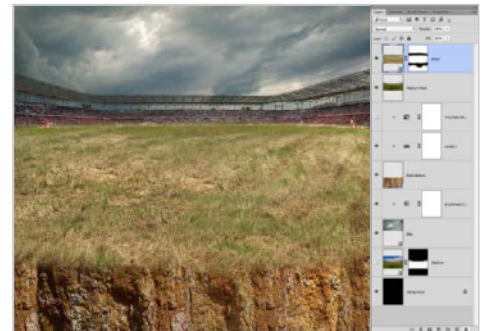
Place the sky

06 Go to File>Place Embedded>'Sky.jpg'. Move it to the top and hit Return/Enter. Drag the layer and place under the Stadium Mask layer. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness/Contrast. In the New Layer window check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK.



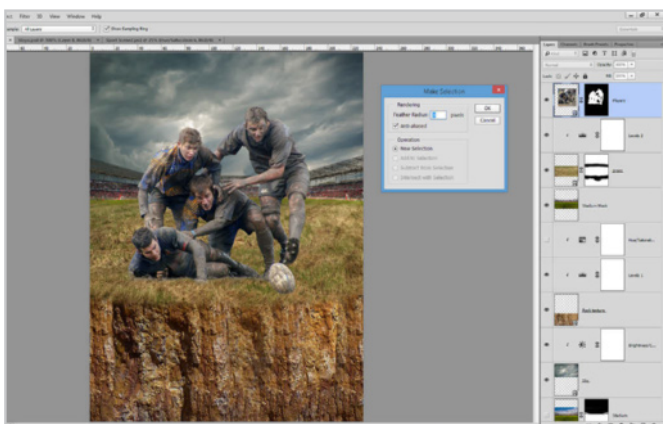
Add textures

07 Go to File>Place Embedded>'Rock Texture.jpg'. Move it to the bottom and hit Return/Enter. Make new adjustments. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Create a clipping mask and click OK. Set the Input Levels to 0, 0.70, 255. Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer and set the Saturation to -30.



Place more textures

08 Place the grass texture on top of the layer stack. Go to File>Place Embedded>'Grass Texture.jpg'. Drag the top middle handle to reduce the height and hit Return/Enter. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab a large soft brush and mask the borders to blend the images.



Use the Pen tool

09 Place 'Player.jpg'. Grab the Pen tool and create a path around the players. In the tool option bar, click Make: Selection. Set the Feather Radius to 3 pixels and hit OK. Now go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection.



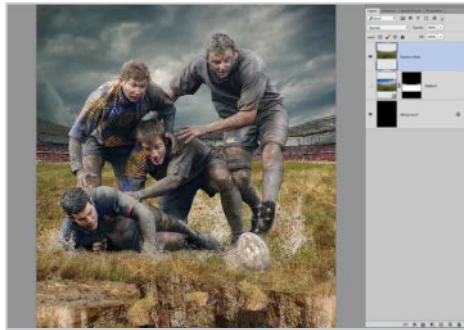
Add shadows and highlights

10 Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Shadows and Highlights. Change the blend mode to Soft Light. Clip the layers, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+G. Grab a small, soft brush. Reduce the brush Opacity to 35% and using white as a Foreground colour, paint over the highlights. Use black to enhance the shadows.



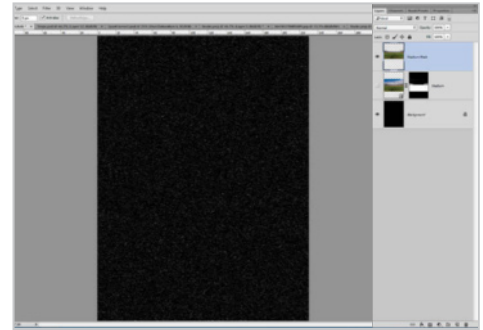
Create splashes

11 Go to Window>Brush Preset. Open the Brush menu and choose Load Brushes. Locate 'Splash_brush.abr' and click OK. Create a new layer and add the splashes around the players. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation. Check Colorize and set the Hue: 30, Saturation: 30 and Lightness: -25.



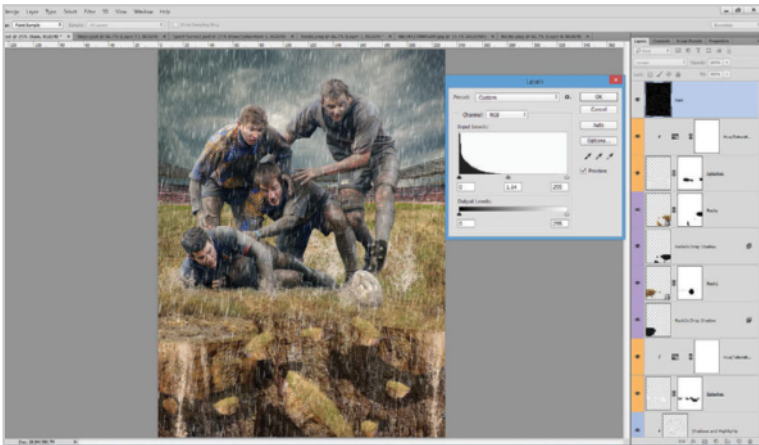
Add drama

12 Place 'Rock1.png' and 'Rock2.png'. Resize them and hit Return/Enter. Go to Layer>Layer Style>Drop Shadow. Set Opacity: 60% and Distance: 100px and hit OK. Let's edit the shadows in their own layer. Go to Layer>Layer Style>Create Layer. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T and stretch the shadows a bit.



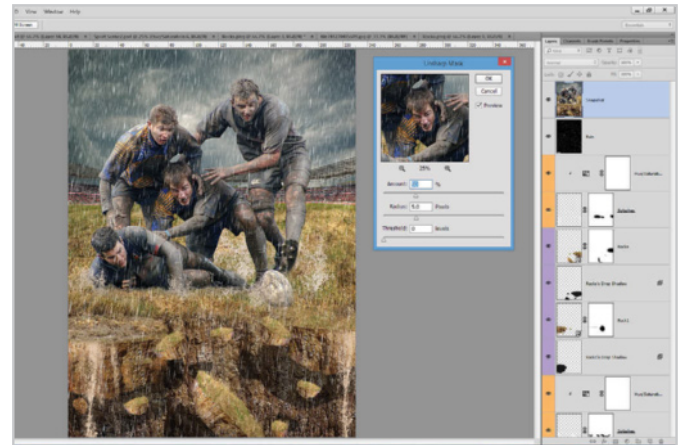
Make a rain effect

13 Create a new layer and fill it with black. Go to Filter>Pixelate>Mezzotint. Choose Type: Short Lines and click OK. Now go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Set the Angle to 0, Distance to 50 pixels and then click OK. Now add the Gaussian Blur and set the Radius to 3 pixels.



Complete the effect

14 Open the Free Transform tool (Cmd/Ctrl+T), rotate and scale the image. Set the blending for the layer to Screen. Now open the Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L) and adjust the input levels to control the intensity of the raindrops.



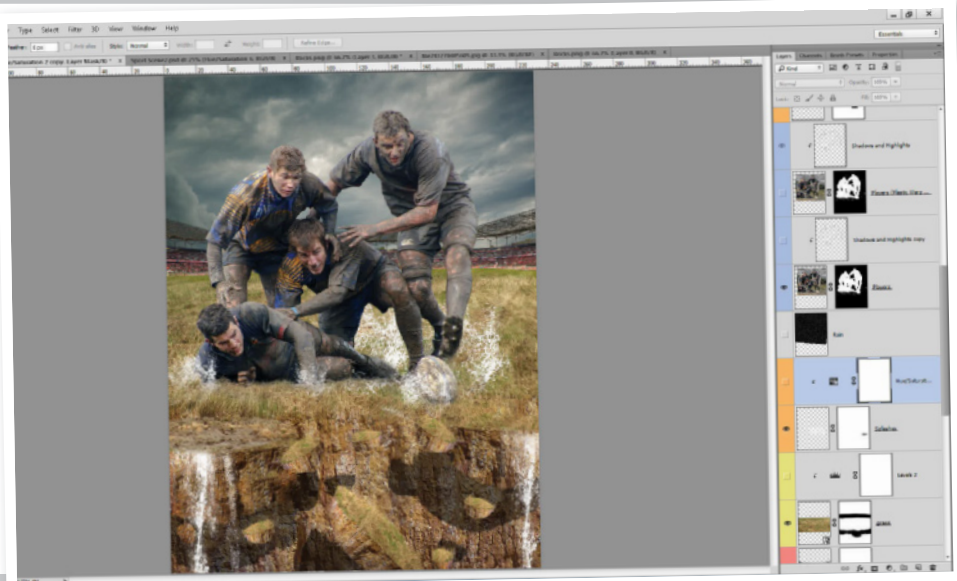
Apply the Unsharp Mask filter

15 Create a snapshot; hit Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+E. Name the new layer Snapshot, then go to Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask. Set the Amount: 50%, Radius: 5 pixels, Threshold: 0 and click OK.

What can go wrong

Not making adjustments

Each image has unique properties, so it is very important to adjust the colour balance, brightness, contrast and so on of every image used in your composition in order to create a pleasing visual combination. Failing to make the adjustments will create an inconsistent and poor-quality composition. Even when we apply custom brushes such as the Splash brush used in this tutorial, it is necessary to make a few adjustments to alter the Hue to match with other elements. Changing the Hue/Saturation and Levels will probably be sufficient to correct most of the colour issues in your composition. Do not hesitate to experiment with the different adjustments until you get the desired result.





On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative

Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

How to arrange, mask, and enhance images to create an abstract piece



Time taken
1 hour

Expert

Andre Villanueva



"I've naturally gravitated towards abstract work, both on and off the computer. I really enjoy the freedom it affords. Working abstract compositions is an exercise I frequently turn to when I have no concrete plans and just want to play around. I discovered Photoshop when studying web design. I'm now art director for a tech company, soothing my inner instructor by sharing techniques with readers."

Create floating abstract art

Mix shapes and photos with masks, layer styles and a healthy dose of imagination to create an abstract arrangement

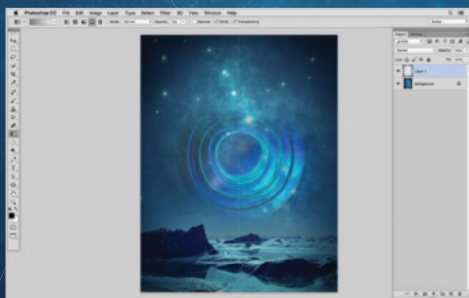
A floating island serving as a conduit for celestial beams. Geometric shapes doubling as portals to faraway locales. An overly adventurous balloonist. Yes, you never know what wild happenings and juxtapositions you'll find in the land of the abstract! Abstract work can be a great way to exercise your Photoshop prowess and imaginative compositional skills. Untethered by the constraints of logic, you're free to just go for it. Stray from reality as little or as much as you like.

Throughout the tutorial, we'll be calling upon both layer masks and clipping masks to control the

visibility of various elements. Layer masks let you hide and fade parts of a layer, while clipping masks use one layer to dictate the visibility of one or more clipped layers.

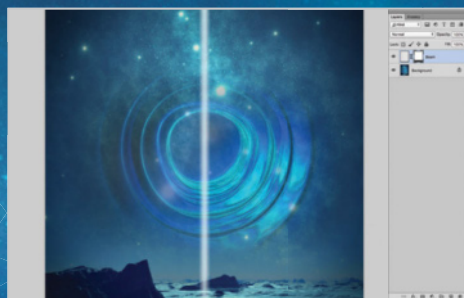
As a finishing touch just for Photoshop users, we'll merge layers and convert it to a Smart Object. This will let us apply the Lens Flare filter for some touches of brilliance. We can apply as much as we like, and since they're applied as Smart Filters, we can go back and tweak the settings at any time.

After completing the tutorial, use what you learned to create your own abstract masterpiece!



Prepare the Gradient tool

01 Open 'Start.psd' from FileSilo. Click 'Create a new layer'. If guides aren't visible, go View>Show>Guides (Elements: View>Guides). Select the Gradient tool. Choose the Reflected type. Set the gradient Opacity to 75%. Click the gradient, choose the Foreground to Transparent preset.



Create a light beam

02 Next, set your Foreground colour to white. Shift+click and drag from the guide to the side a bit, then release. Press the Add Layer Mask button in the Layers palette. Set gradient type to Linear. With the Foreground as black, add gradients to the top and bottom of mask to fade beam.

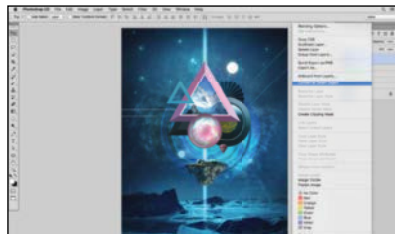


Add the nebula

03 Go to File>Place (Place Embedded in CC) and grab 'Nebula.jpg'. Press Return/Enter to confirm. Set the blend mode to Soft Light via the drop-down at the top of the Layers palette. Add a layer mask. Paint black at 40-60% and use gradients to reduce and fade into the existing backdrop.

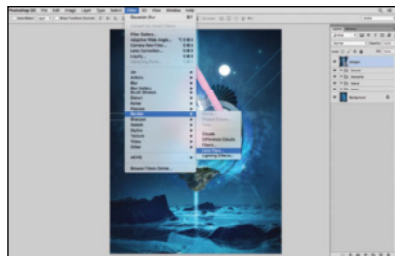
Expert edit

Add lens flares



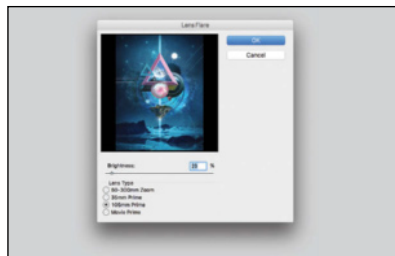
Convert to Smart Object

01 This only works in Photoshop. With the topmost layer selected, press **Cmd/Ctrl+Option/Alt+Shift+E** to merge layers. Right-click on the merged layer and choose **Convert to Smart Object**.



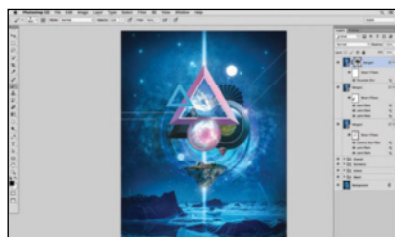
Add a lens flare

02 Go to **Filter>Render>Lens Flare**. Click in the preview to position the lens flare. Choose **Lens Type** from the four options and adjust **Brightness**. Now click **OK**.



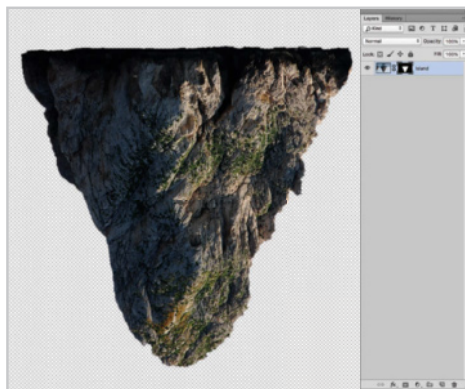
Add more lens flares

03 To add more lens flares, repeat the previous step as many times as desired. Try the different lens types. Paint black in the **Smart Filters** mask to reduce if needed.



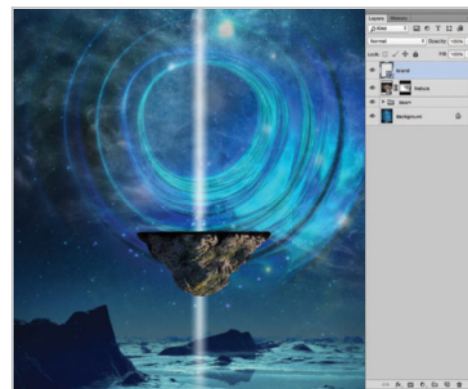
Finalise adjustments

04 Since we've applied the lens flares to a **Smart Object**, we're free to re-edit each at any time. You can also apply other effects like the potent **Camera Raw Filter**.



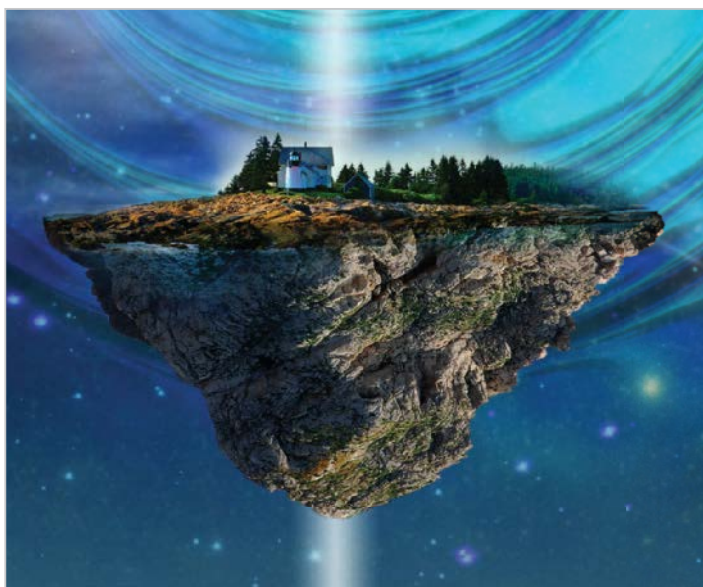
Select the island base

04 Open 'Island.psd'. Go to **Image>Image Rotation>Flip Canvas Vertical** (**Elements: Image>Rotate>Flip Vertical**). Use the **Quick Selection** tool to paint/select our future island base. Add a **layer mask**, then save the **PSD**.



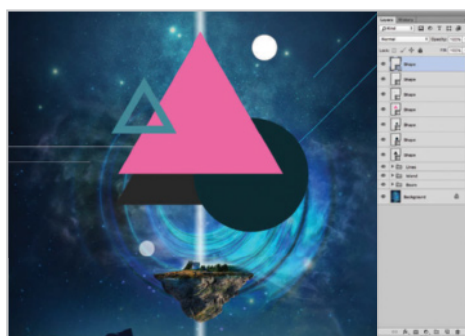
Place the island

05 Now you need to go back in the main document and place the island you just saved. Before confirming, move the top or bottom control inward, making the island more squat. Scale down, position, then confirm.



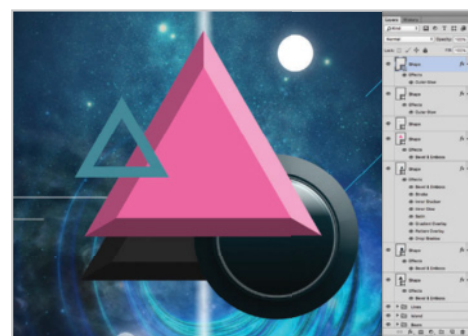
Add island detail

06 Place 'Lighthouse.jpg', scale and position atop the island base before confirming. Apply a **layer mask**. Paint black to merge with the island. Scale and position more if needed. You can also refine the island. Duplicate, transform, and mask to patch up any areas.



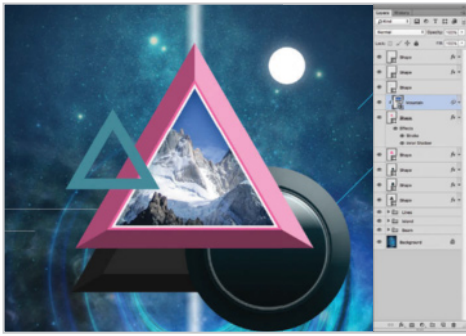
Introduce shapes

07 Add shapes on new layers with **Shape** tools like **Ellipse**, **Polygon** and **Custom**. In Photoshop, ensure **Shape** is selected in the options bar to keep as **vector** shape layers. The colour is dictated by the **Foreground** colour. We used white, #ed67a2, #438a99, #0e2a32 and #272727.



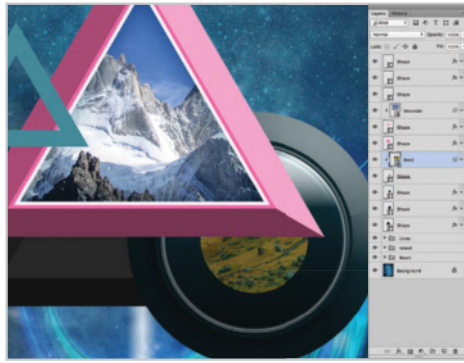
Use layer styles

08 Give some of the shapes dimension and pizzazz with **layer styles**. We won't prescribe any specific styles or settings. Play with them and experiment. **CC** users: although we don't show it here, you can now add multiple instances of most of the styles.



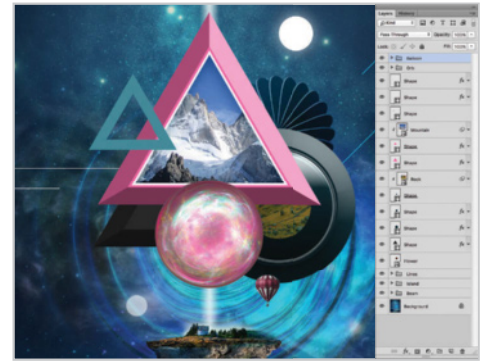
Create a clipping mask

09 Create a shape that's inset from a larger shape (like this triangle within the main triangle). Place 'Mountain.jpg'. Position so it covers the shape. Scale if needed before confirming. In the Layers palette, Option/Alt+click between the two layers to clip.



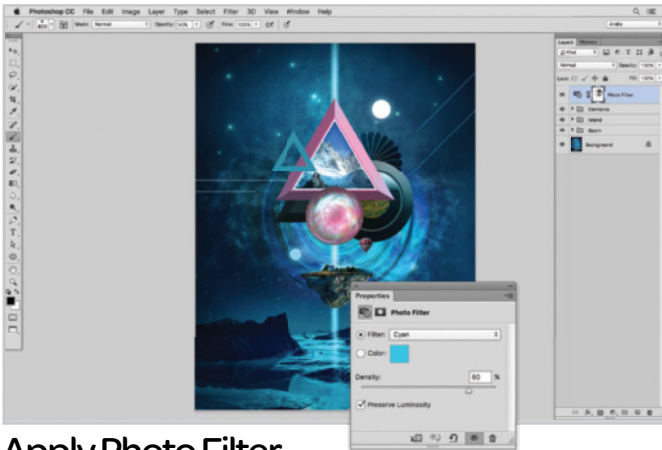
Add another clipping mask

10 Create another shape that will act as a clipping mask. Place 'Rock.jpg' atop it, then form the clipping mask by Option/Alt+clicking between the two layers. If you'd like to make another clipping mask with one of your own images, go for it!



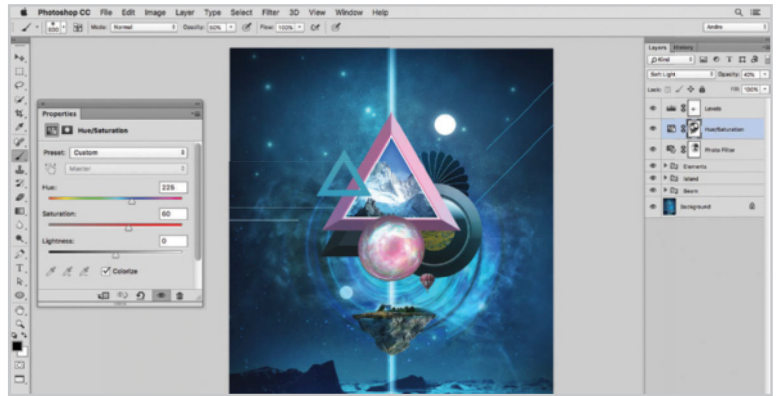
Place novel objects

11 Place 'Orb.png' and position centrally (or wherever you like, really). Place and arrange 'Balloon.png' (courtesy of the hot air balloon pack from Media Militia: [bit.ly/1jm2erQ](#)) and 'Flower.png'. Do you have anything else you'd like to add to the mix?



Apply Photo Filter

12 Select the top layer. Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment' button, choose Photo Filter. Set Filter to Cyan and increase Density to 80%. Paint black in the mask to tone down the adjustment in areas.



Make final adjustments

13 Add another adjustment, choose Hue/Saturation. Set to Soft Light. Drop Opacity to 40%. Tick Colorize. Slide Hue to 225 and Saturation to 60. Add another adjustment and choose Levels. To lighten, slide Midtones to the left and slide the black Output slider inward slightly. Paint black in the masks to reduce.

Expert tip

Master clipping masks

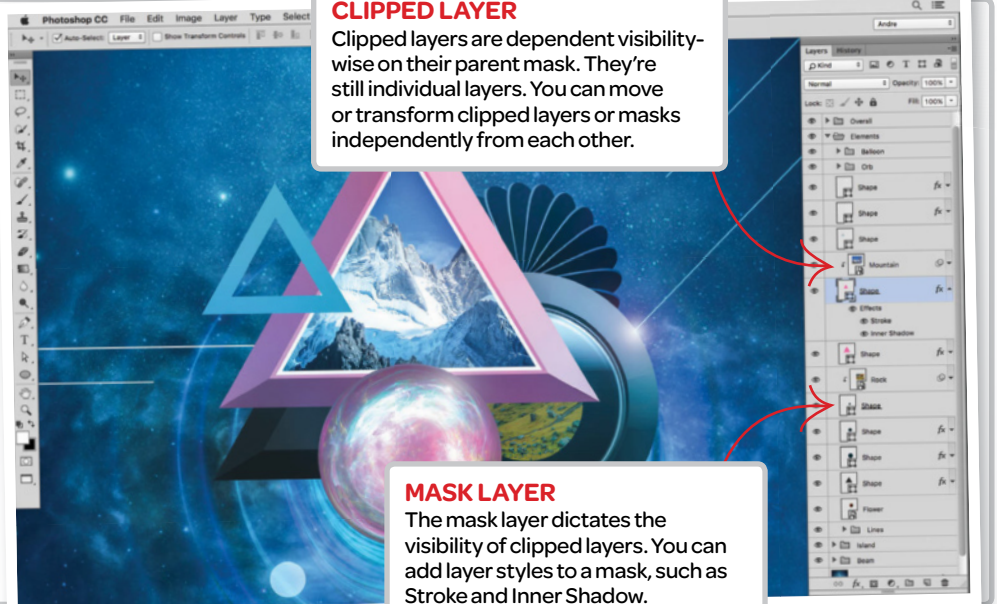
Clipping masks seem to cause confusion among both neophytes and experienced users alike. Let's break it down. In this image we've used two clipping masks to confine photos into geometric shapes. The mask dictates the visibility of the clipped layers. To clip a layer, place it directly above the intended mask. Hold Opt/Alt, then move the cursor in between the two layers. When the cursor changes to two overlapping circles, left-click, and then release all. The upper layer is now clipped to the mask layer. Re-position either layer with the Move tool. You can also Free Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T) them independently.

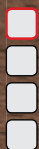
CLIPPED LAYER

Clipped layers are dependent visibility-wise on their parent mask. They're still individual layers. You can move or transform clipped layers or masks independently from each other.

MASK LAYER

The mask layer dictates the visibility of clipped layers. You can add layer styles to a mask, such as Stroke and Inner Shadow.





On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative

Essentials

Works with



Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

Use Multiply and Overlay layers, and clipping mask layers to alter colour

Time taken
5 hours

Expert

David Cousens



"I've always enjoyed storytelling in my artwork, and Photoshop lets me bring my craziest ideas to life to share with the world. *Falling* is a story I've been wanting to tell and I'm developing it as a comic. This poster helps people know what to expect. I've been running my illustration company, CoolSurface.com for nine years and you can follow me on Twitter and Instagram."



Flat colour comic-book posters

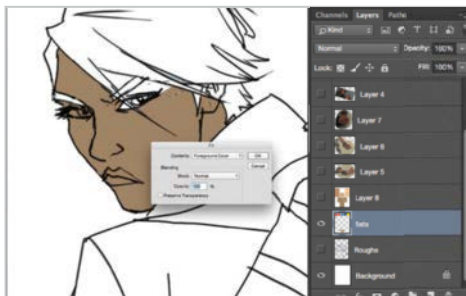
Learn how to colour epic sci-fi/fantasy posters in an animated style using blending modes, brushes and the Lasso tool

Posters are the quickest way to get an idea across to somebody. You can sell a product, a service or a story in a moment. It's important to make posters eye-catching, and enable the audience to get a feel for what the image is about.

Here, we've made a poster for the upcoming comic *Falling*. This tutorial will take you through the process of flat colouring the artwork using aliased pixels underneath the line art (because you can easily select and re-fill aliased pixels ad infinitum without the Paint Bucket tool 'bleeding' colours) and using clipping mask layers to apply and control

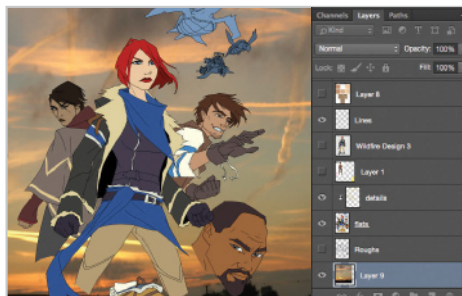
effects. Clipping mask layers will only affect the things they are connected to, so you can apply a filter to the characters without altering the background, or the shading we apply here only appears over the flat colours, and not the sky. It's really helpful to be able to control how things look on your poster.

The line work for this tutorial is supplied on the FileSilo, so that you can get straight on with the colouring portion of making the poster, but if you fancy drawing yourself a new poster from scratch, please feel free!



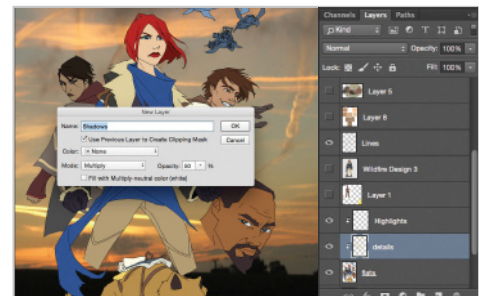
Flat colour with Lasso

01 Select the Polygonal Lasso tool (Shift+L), set it to Add to Selection and uncheck Anti-aliasing. Use it to make selections and then fill them with colour by pressing Shift+backspace, select Use: Foreground Color and click OK. Deselect when filled and repeat until finished.



Bring in the sky

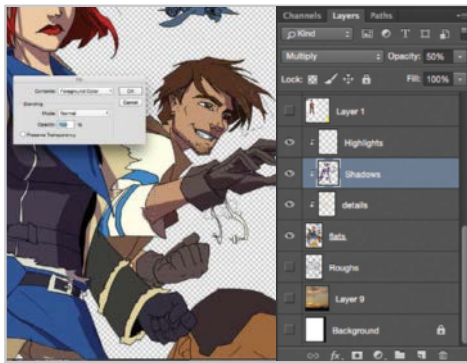
02 Open up the sky photograph and copy and paste the photo underneath your flat colours layer. Free Transform the sky (Cmd/Ctrl+T) and drag the corner points to fill your image. Don't worry about constraining the proportions; just fill the background with the sky.



Add a shading layer

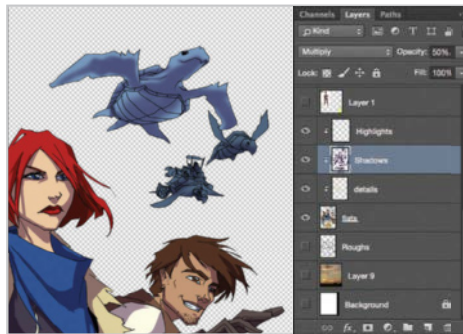
03 Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N) named Shadows. Tick 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and set Mode: Multiply, Opacity: 50%. Select a dark purple (hex colour number 42134F) to start applying the shading. All of your shading will be painted on this layer.





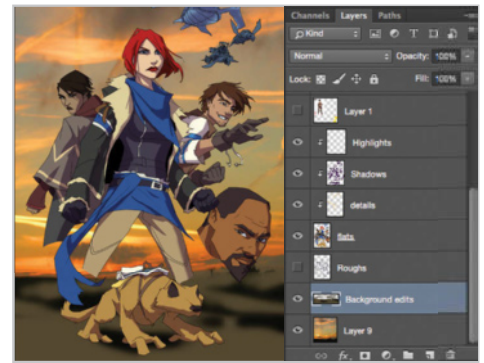
Apply hard-edged shading

04 Either use the Freehand Lasso tool (with Anti-aliasing selected) to make selections and then Fill using Shift+backspace, or if you'd prefer, just use a standard brush to paint in the shadows. Paint the shadows as if they all share the same light source.



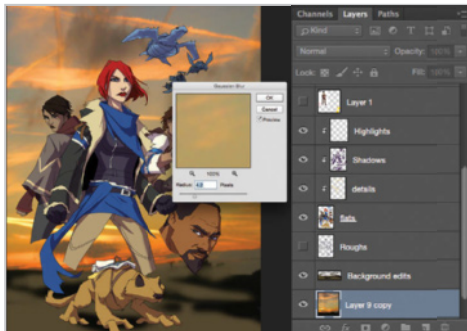
Softer shading

05 When you're finished with the hard-edged shading on the main characters, switch to an airbrush (still using the same purple) and apply some less-defined shadows to the flying turtles. Objects far away should always have softer shadows because they become less defined in the distance.



Duplicate the background

06 Click on your background photo in the Layers palette and duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+J). It's wise to duplicate any photos you are using so that you still have the original to refer to if you need to. Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N) called Background Edits.



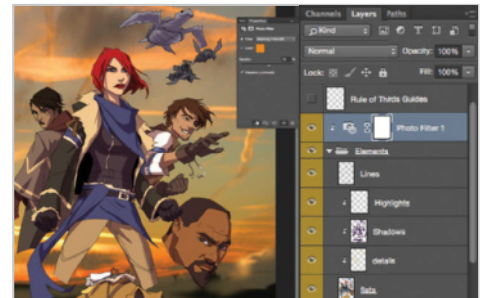
Edit the background

07 Use your airbrush to paint in some splodges of colour over the photo to look like ground. Press Alt to use the Eyedropper tool and pick colours from the photo itself to remain consistent. Reduce the grain of the photo (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and apply a blur of four pixels).



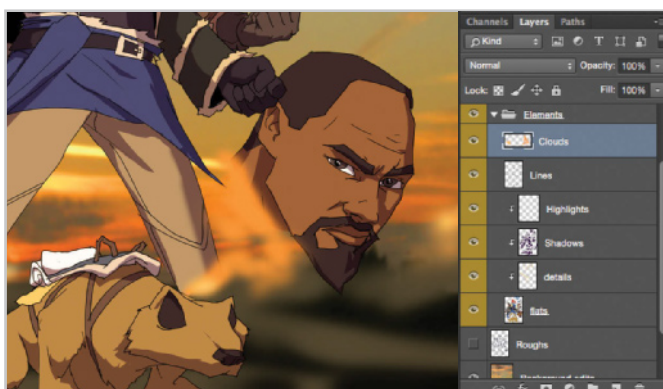
Create a layer group

08 Click on the highest layer (the lines), hold down the Shift key and click on the flat colour layer. With the layers selected, press Cmd/Ctrl+G and name the layer group folder. You can also assign a colour to the group (this makes navigating through the Layers palette easier).



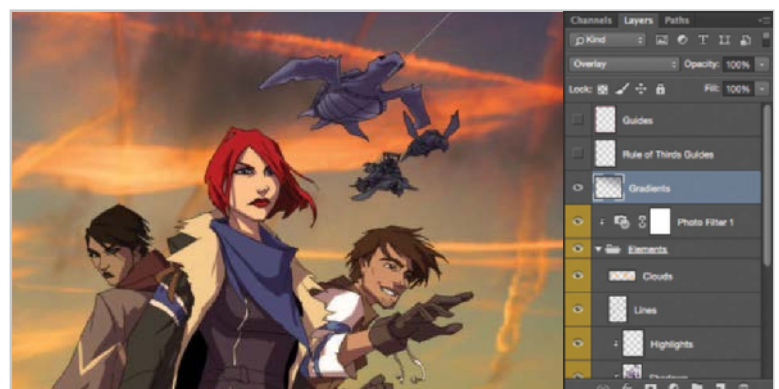
Add a photo filter

09 Make the characters appear to inhabit the same world as the photograph, click the Add Adjustment Layer icon in the Layers palette, select Photo Filter, choose Warming Filter (85), set Density to 53% and check Preserve Luminosity. Place the layer above the group folder, right-click and select Create Clipping Mask.



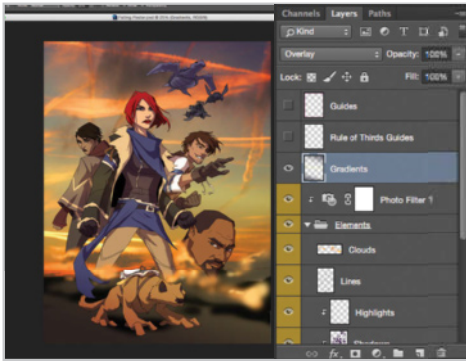
Paint in the clouds

10 Create a new layer above the line art called Clouds. Use the airbrush to paint clouds over the characters as seen in the image. Start with darker colours as a base for the clouds, and make your brush smaller as the colours get lighter. Pick colours from the background photo.



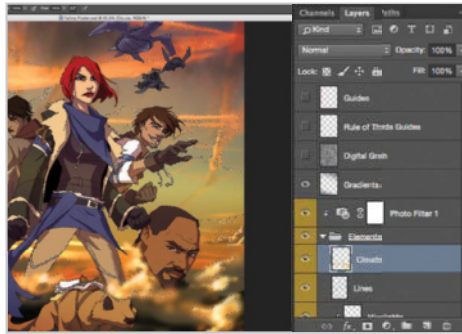
Overlay linear gradients

11 Create a new layer called Gradients and set the blending mode to Overlay. Select the Linear Gradient tool (Shift+G), set to Foreground to Transparent, and Opacity to 25%. Click and drag to apply dark purple gradients diagonally from the top and bottom of the image to darken the sky and floor.



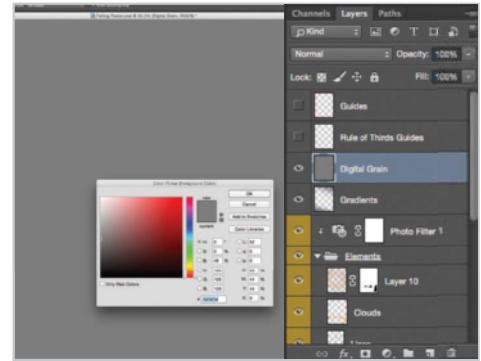
Add a reflected gradient

12 Your eyes are drawn to brighter colours, so switch to the Reflected gradient and using a bright yellow colour picked from the clouds, apply a gradient across the middle of the image horizontally to make it lighter.



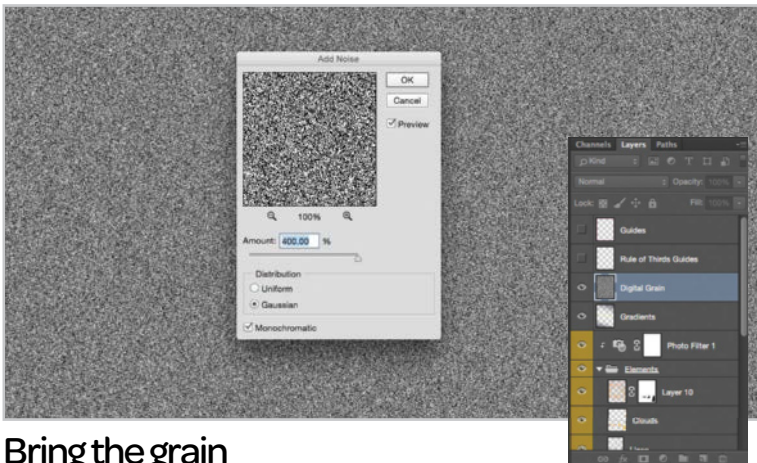
Simulate light bloom

13 Select the Luminosity (all the lighter areas) of the image (Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+2). This generates a selection of marching ants. Copy from all visible layers (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+C) then press Cmd/Ctrl+V to paste on a new layer. Set the layer to Overlay, apply a Gaussian Blur of 7.6 pixels.



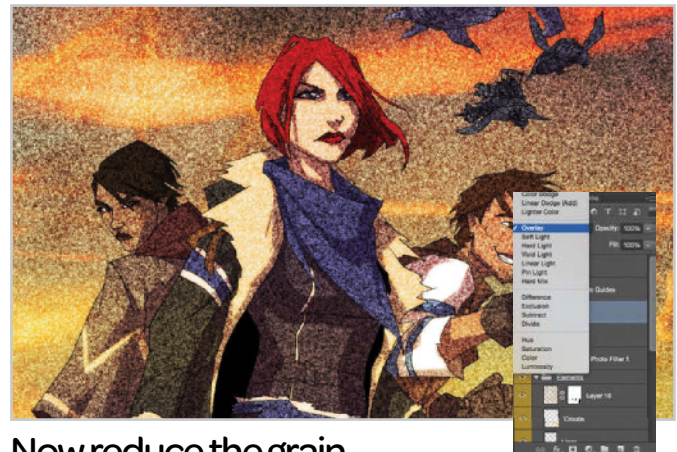
Use digital grain

14 To unify the grain of the background photo with the main characters, we need to add a digital grain layer. Create a new layer at the top of the layer stack and name it Digital Grain. Fill the layer with a neutral grey colour of R:125 G:125 B:125.



Bring the grain

15 Go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise, with Amount: 400% and Distribution: Gaussian, tick the Monochromatic box, then click OK. Go to Filter>Brush Strokes>Spatter, with a Spray Radius of 10 and Smoothness 5, click OK. Press Cmd/Ctrl+F to repeat the application of the Brush Stroke filter.



Now reduce the grain

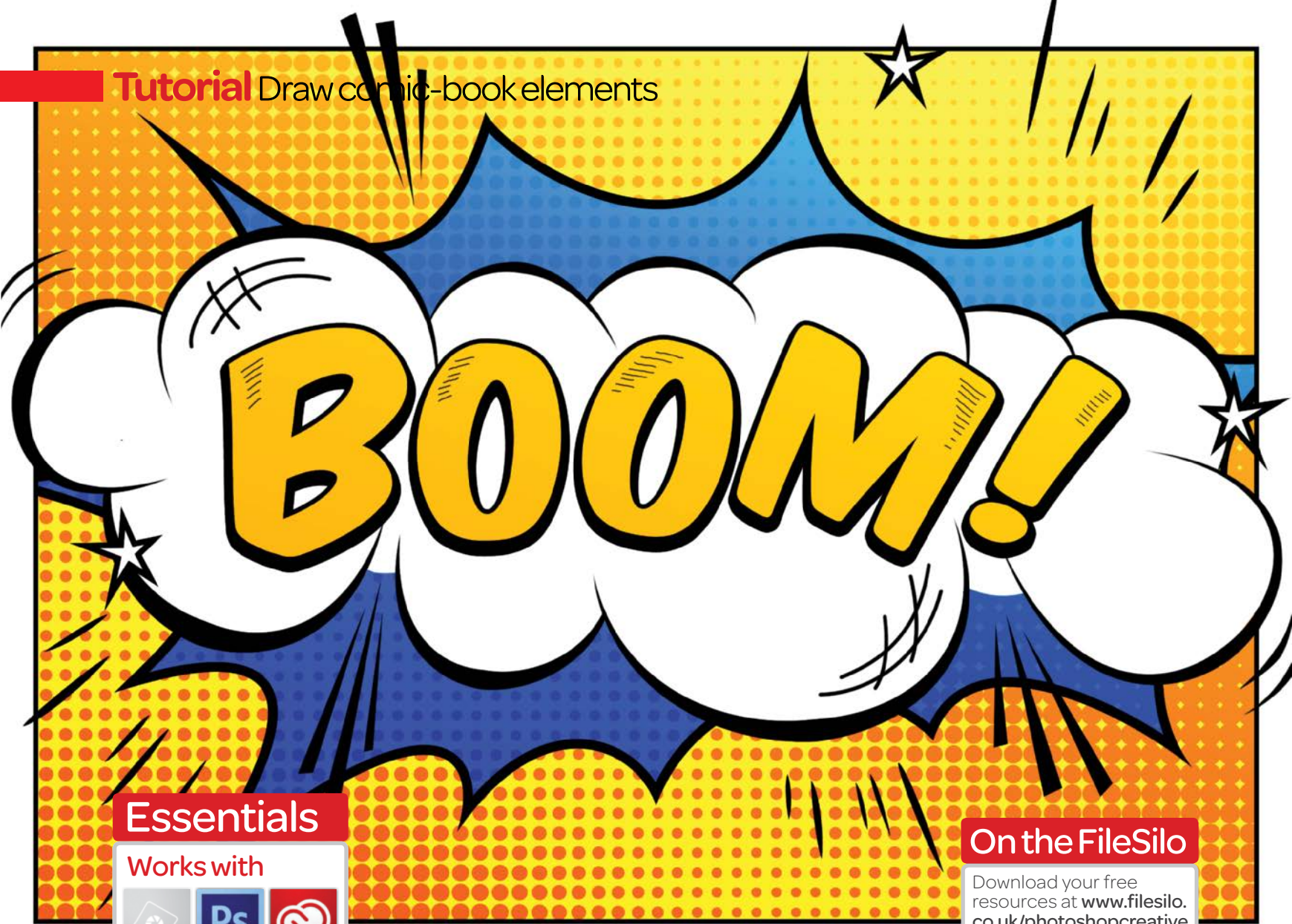
16 Go to Filter>Blur>Blur (not Gaussian Blur). Set the layer to Overlay and 5% Opacity. To get the most out of the grain effect, you will have to vary the opacity to suit each individual image. The opacity should be somewhere between 5% and 20%.

What you can do with it

Communicate your ideas on a poster

The plot of the *Falling* comic is far too large to get across in just one poster. In this situation, rather than trying to pick just one message, we've focused on the feel of the comic so the audience can at least get a sense of what to expect. A montage image shows some of the main characters and gives viewers an idea of their personalities. The main character looks determined, which shows the story has a purpose and a theme, and the supporting characters suggest that the story will also have drama, humour and mystery. You can convey a lot with just colour and form.





Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

Use the Pen tool and combine filters with adjustment layers



Time taken
1 hour

Expert

Jenni Sanders



"Photoshop isn't just for photos! I love using the Pen tool to get a sharper, more accurate look when creating illustrations, especially those with a real cartoon style. From the moment I saw my dad manipulate photos as a child, I was hooked and have since worked entirely within the industry of photography and Photoshop."

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative

Draw comic-book elements

Use the Pen tool and Photoshop filters to create this simple yet dramatic comic-book panel

It's great to be able to create comic-book art, but if you want to create the look of a traditional comic, you need to master the art of backgrounds, shapes and text. The first project here will focus on using filters and Smart Objects to create a classic pop-art style background built up of varying sized dots. Once complete, it is designed to stay as customisable as possible to let you change the dots and colours as often as you like to fit future designs. The second uses the Pen tool combined with Custom Shapes to create a dynamic and energetic explosion scene. The Pen

provides maximum control of the shapes while also keeping edges crisp and clean; perfect for this comic-book style. Finally, the third project focuses on text, transforming each letter and showing how to use blend modes across different layers in order to get new effects.

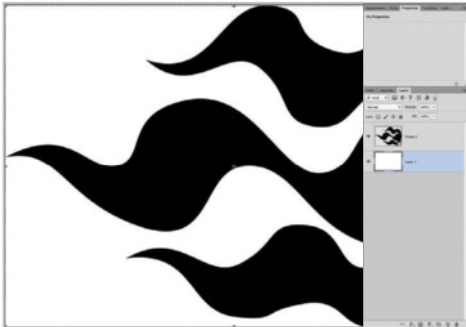
After learning each technique, it's easy to change or adjust elements, draw different shapes or add in other text. You can even create multiple panels and combine them into a full strip. Remember to keep colours simple, not stray too far from primary colours, and keep outlines black – stay bold!

Create a pop art background Have some fun with the Halftone filter



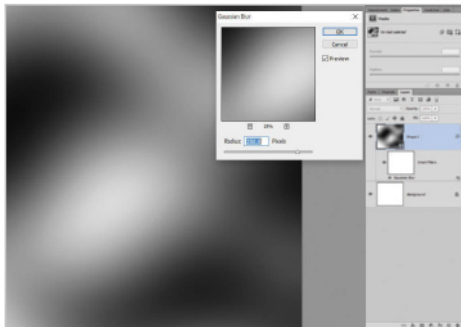
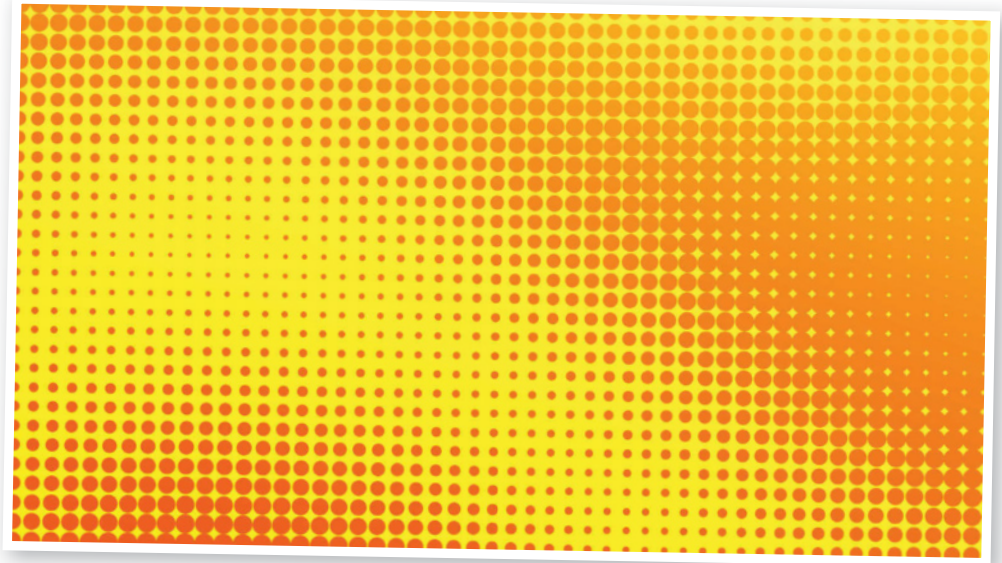
Draw a shape

01 Create a new document; a square shape will work well. Using the Custom Shapes tool (U), pick an interesting shape from the drop-down menu on the top tool bar, with lots of variation. Click and drag to draw it across the canvas. Make sure it's filled black with no stroke.



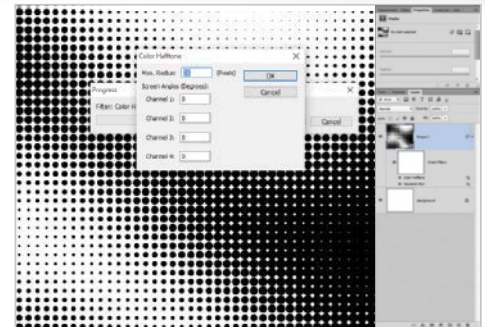
Create a Smart Object

02 With your shape created, right-click and convert it to a Smart Object. Double-click to open the new Smart Object and create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N), drag it underneath the shape and fill it white. Save and return to the main document. This will allow you to adjust it later.



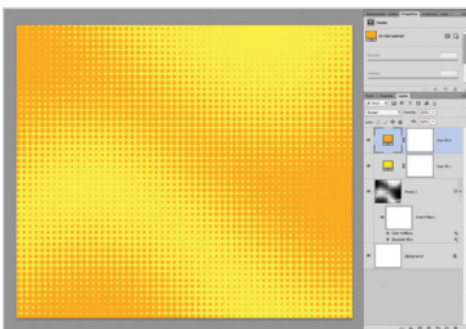
Add Gaussian Blur

03 With your Smart Object selected, go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. The amount of blur you need will depend on your canvas size; aim to get a similar level of blur as you can see in the screenshot – using Smart Objects means you can adjust the filter later if needed.



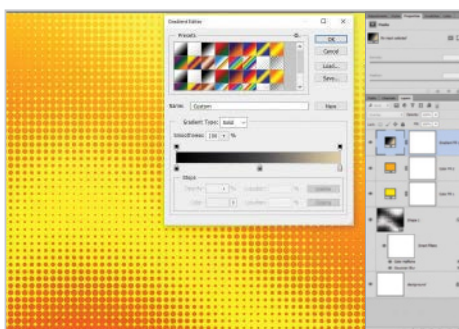
Use a halftone pattern

04 There is a Halftone filter effect, but you can find a more accurate way of adding halftone under Filter>Pixelate>Color Halftone. You can adjust each channel independently but for now, set all the values to 0. Find what Max Radius works for your pattern. Here 35 pixels works well.



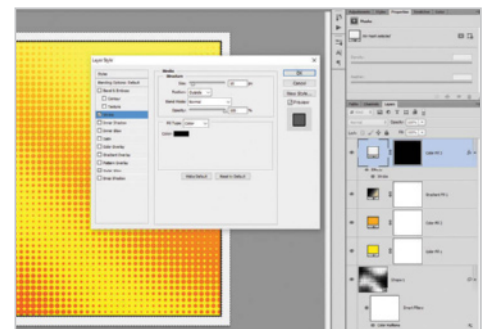
Create colour layers

05 Select the black-and-white circle at the bottom of the Layers panel and add a Solid Color adjustment layer. Set the colour to a vibrant yellow and its blend mode to Darken. Create another Solid Color layer, this time make it orange with a blend mode of Screen.



Use a gradient layer

06 To give the colours more depth, add a Gradient adjustment layer. Double-click to edit the layer and click the gradient preview. Add three colour points, moving from black on the left, to grey in the middle and beige on the right. Click OK and set this layer to Overlay.



Make a frame

07 Select the Rectangular Marquee tool (M) and draw a rectangle just inside the edge of the canvas. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I to invert the selection and create a Solid Color layer – it will automatically add a layer mask. Right-click>Blending Options and add a black Stroke to finish.



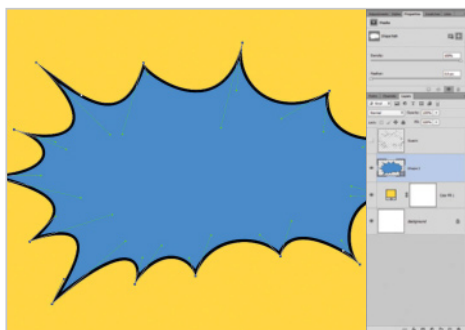


Draw exciting shapes Use the Pen tool to add shapes to your comic art



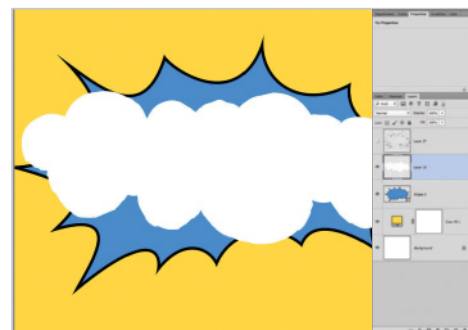
Make a sketch

01 Create a canvas and fill it with a bright yellow. Create a new layer with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N and select the Brush tool. Begin to sketch a rough outline of what shapes you want to create; this will help speed up your drawing later on, even if you don't actually stick to your sketch.



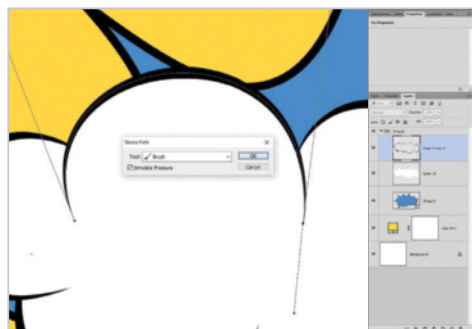
Begin drawing shapes

02 Use the Pen tool to draw the background star burst shape. Click to place an anchor point on each of the points and hold Alt and drag to adjust the angle of each line either side of the point. Close the path and then fill it bright blue, with a black stroke.



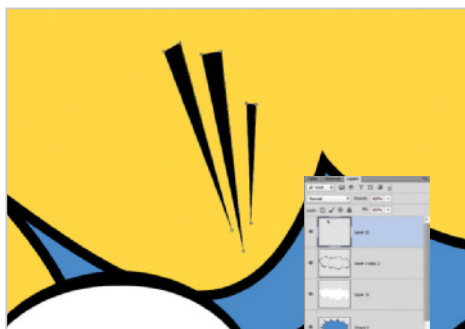
Create a cloud

03 Create a new layer and select the Brush tool (B). Use a 100% Hardness, large, white brush to paint the cloud. Now, set your colour to black and reduce the size of the brush tip to around 30px – you can adjust this later to suit your image size.



Draw an arc

04 Create a new layer. Select the Pen tool and draw an arc around a curve of the cloud. Right-click and select Stroke Path. Tick Simulate Pressure and hit OK. If your line is too thick, thin or soft, undo (Cmd/Ctrl+Alt+Z) and adjust your Brush (B). Continue around the cloud.



Add some action

05 Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N). Using your sketch as a guide, use the Pen tool to draw some groups of thin triangles. Click to create a point; create two more, then close with the final click. Create two more triangles. Right-click and select Fill Path, then fill in black.



Add more details

06 Go around your cloud adding more details, drawing a mix of triangle groups and curved lines using the Pen tool and filling paths. Keep each shape on a new layer to give yourself lots of flexibility. Use Cmd/Ctrl+T to transform a shape if it's not quite in the right place.

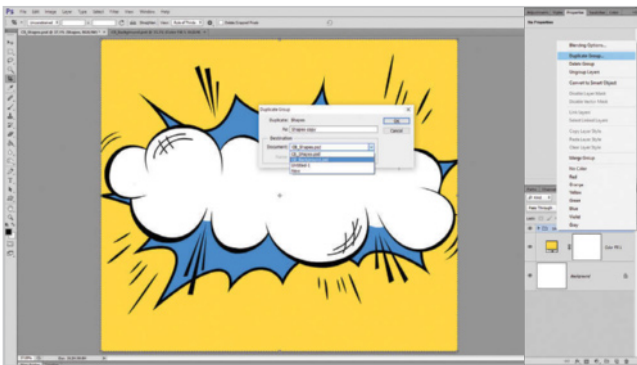


Use the Custom Shape tool

07 As well as drawing your own, select the Custom Shape tool (U) and choose the solid star from the top tool bar drop-down. Drag it out on the canvas quite small on the edge of the cloud; fill in white with a black stroke. Use Cmd/Ctrl+T to rotate and resize.



Add some text Complete the look with some energetic text



Set up the scene

01 Open up your background image and the cloud image from the previous two projects. Go to the cloud image, select everything and group with **Cmd/Ctrl+G**. Right-click>Duplicate Group and from the drop-down select the Background image. Hit OK and go to the Background image.



Integrate the images

02 Make the shapes look like a part of the background by grabbing the gradient layer and bringing it to the top. Now, duplicate the base halftone layer (**Cmd/Ctrl+J**) and drag it above the blue burst layer. Right-click>Create Clipping Mask and set the blend mode to Darken, Fill to 10%.



Type your letters

03 You can download comic book-style fonts from sites such as dafont.com and urbanfonts.com and install them on your system. It will appear in Photoshop as a useable font. Select the Text tool (T) and type the word BOOM!, each letter on a separate layer.



Adjust each letter

04 Use **Cmd/Ctrl+T** to rotate and position each letter so that it appears more dynamic. Group the letters together and drag the group underneath the Gradient adjustment layer. Fill each letter in a bright yellow colour. The gradient will add a nice effect.



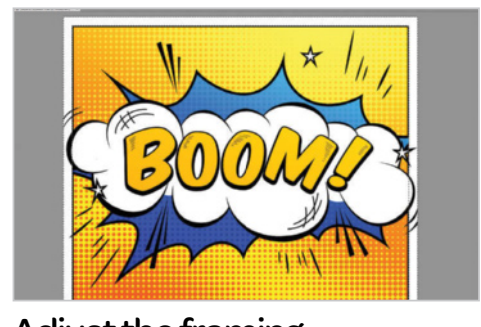
Comic book blending options

05 Right-click the B and select Blending Options. Activate Stroke and add a black one, around 10. Activate Drop Shadow, Opacity to 100%, Angle to 90, Distance to around 15, Spread to 100 and Size: 18. Values will depend on your image size, letter size and desired effect, so have a play!



Finish the text

06 Right-click the B layer preview and select Copy Layer Style. Highlight the other letters, right-click>Paste Layer Style. You may want to move or rearrange them. Create a new layer, **Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N**, and with a thin, black Brush (B), draw some lines on the letters.



Adjust the framing

07 For a bit more dynamism, the cloud is going to burst out of the white frame, with the blue shape staying behind. Select the blue starburst layer. **Cmd/Ctrl+** click on the layer preview of the white frame layer. Add a layer mask to the blue shape using this selection to cut off the points behind the frame.



Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

Use blend modes, gradients, stroked paths, and edit Brush settings



Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Sarah Cousins



"Before settling on this final design, I tested a variety of colours and effects, which is so quick and easy to do with Photoshop's endless editing capabilities. I am a freelance illustrator, designer and writer, and have been using Photoshop extensively since forming my own illustration and design company, Cool Surface, eight years ago."



Start image

Apply digital make-up

Learn how to enhance your portraits by using gradients and the Brush tool to apply some digital make-up

When it comes to creating realistic beauty shots, subtlety is key. Using Photoshop to enhance portraits by removing blemishes, stray hairs and pores needs to be done carefully. This tutorial will reveal how to subtly retouch a portrait photo – and then we'll be throwing subtlety out the window to apply fun and vibrant digital make-up! By using blend modes, Warp transformations, brushes and more, we'll be adding striking eye make-up to this model.

We've provided everything you need to get started, including a pack of brushes that have been specifically modified for this tutorial. If you'd like to try this tutorial out on a photo of yourself, the methods can be applied to any image, however some adaptation will most likely be necessary.

We have used a gold theme, although different colours suit different people, so always choose a colour that works for you. Or create something vibrant, and go for a variety of colours!

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative



Tidy with Spot Healing

01 Open 'make-up start image.jpg' from the FileSilo. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate the Background layer. Select the Spot Healing Brush (S), and use it to remove stray hairs and blemishes from the face, then use the Clone Stamp tool to remove hairs from the background.



Remove stray hairs

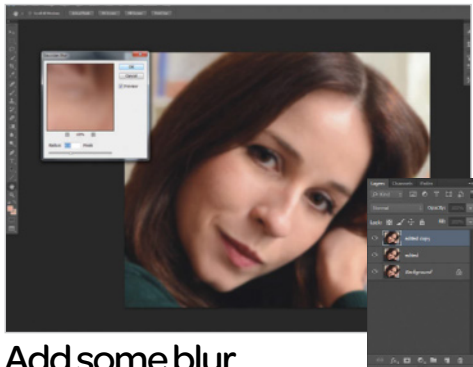
02 Use the Patch tool set to Content Aware to remove stray hairs close to the hairline. Change the tool to Normal to remove lines from under the eyes, by selecting them and dragging the selection to other smooth areas, such as the forehead.

Expert tip



No Pen tool?

Don't worry if you haven't got the Pen tool – to complete step 6 using Elements, make an initial selection with Magnetic Lasso; it will automatically snap to the edge of the face. Press Q to switch to Quick Mask mode and use the Brush tool to refine the selection across the cheeks and nose. If you are struggling to create a clean edge, you can use a low Opacity airbrush and create a soft edge instead of hard; this will give an alternative, but still attractive, effect.



Add some blur

03 Duplicate the edited layer, go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, enter 8px and click OK. Add a layer mask and press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert it. Use a white airbrush at 50% Opacity to reveal some of the blurring, mainly on the cheeks and forehead, and sparingly around the mouth and nose.



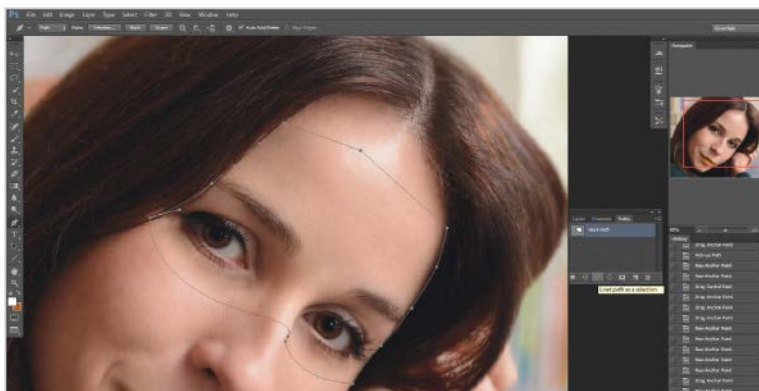
Colour the lips

04 Add a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N), name it Lip Colour, and change the layer's blending mode to Color and Opacity to 60%. Use an airbrush with R:200 G:113 B:0 to paint over the lips. Cmd/Ctrl+click the layer in the Layers palette to select it. Add another new layer and name it Lip Shimmer.



Add lip shimmer

05 Set the blending mode to Screen. Use the CS Shimmer brush at 6px with R:255 G:247 B:240 to add a glittery effect to the lips. Add another layer, name it Lip Shine, set it to Screen and 65% Opacity. Use a white airbrush to paint reflected light on the lips.



Make a path

06 Select the Pen tool (P) and use it to create a path as shown. In the Paths palette, click 'Load path as a selection'. Add a new layer, change the blend mode to Color and Opacity to 60%. Select the Gradient tool (G) set to Linear and Foreground to Transparent. Elements users: check the Expert Tip above.



Bring in gradients

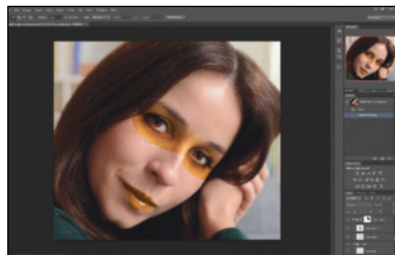
07 With a colour of R:224 G:168 B:88, click and drag from the bottom of the selection on the nose upwards towards the brow line. Add a new layer set to Overlay and 60% Opacity and apply a gradient as before, but this time with R:80 G:48 B:13. Deselect (Cmd/Ctrl+D).





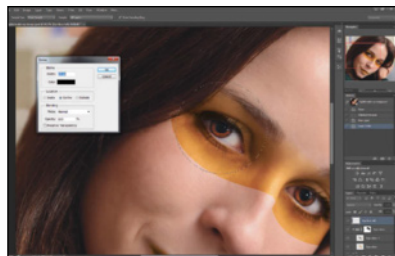
Elements users

Applying the eyeliner



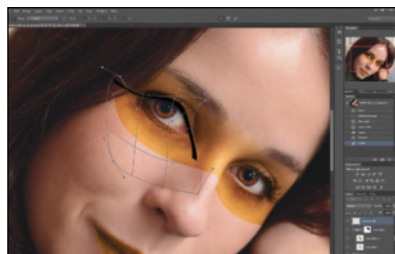
Create an ellipse

01 Select the Elliptical Marquee tool, and use it to create an elliptical selection roughly the width you want the eyeliner to be, positioned over the eye.



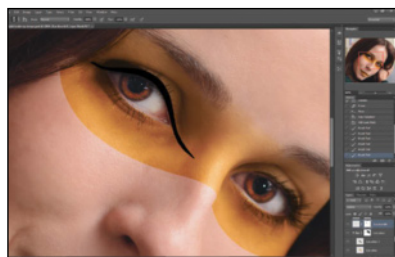
Stroke

02 Press B and choose a standard hard-edged brush. Go to Edit>Stroke, set the colour to black, enter 25px in the pop-up window, click OK.



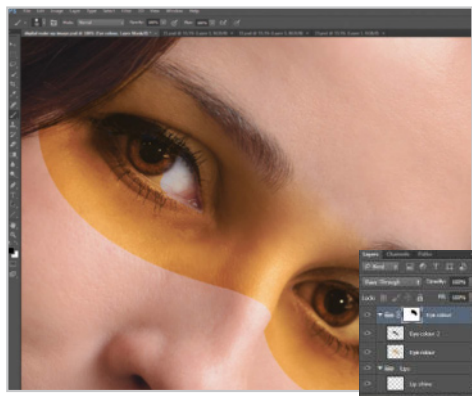
Warp

03 Press Cmd/Ctrl+D to deselect, erase (E) the bottom half of the circle. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T, right-click and choose Warp. Drag the corners and handles to edit the line accordingly.



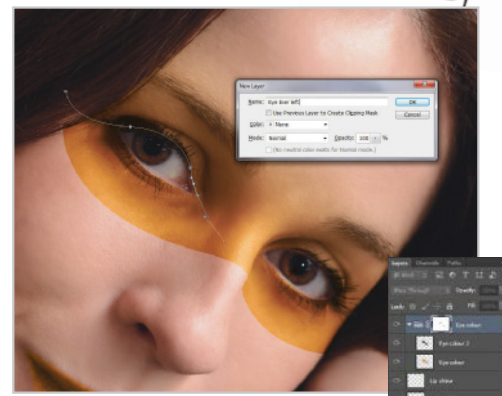
Taper the ends

04 Add a layer mask to the Eyeliner layer and use a black hard-edged brush to edit the ends of the eyeliner and give a tapered appearance.



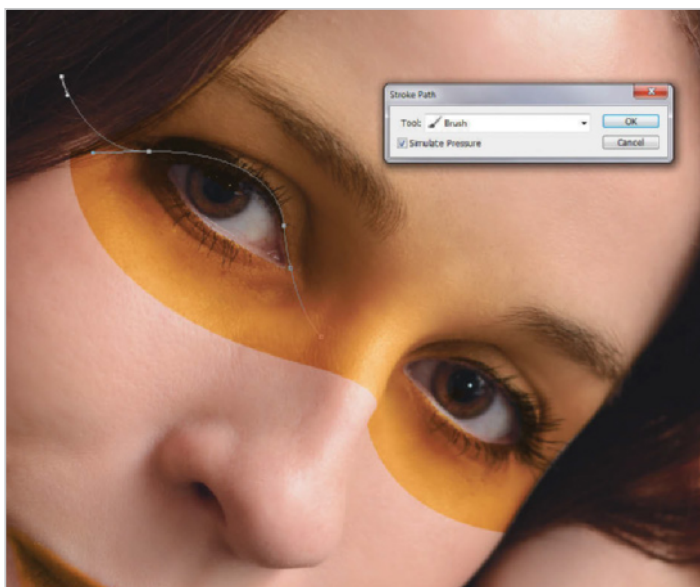
Group and mask

08 Hold Shift, click each eye colour layer and press Cmd/Ctrl+G to group. Add a layer mask to the group and use a black hard-edged brush to remove the colour from the eyes, and an airbrush to remove it from the eyebrows upwards.



Create an eye liner path

09 Use the Pen tool to create a path along the top of the left eyelid, ensuring it extends towards the nose and over the left of the hair. Add a new layer named Eyeliner Left. (Elements users, check the side panel.)



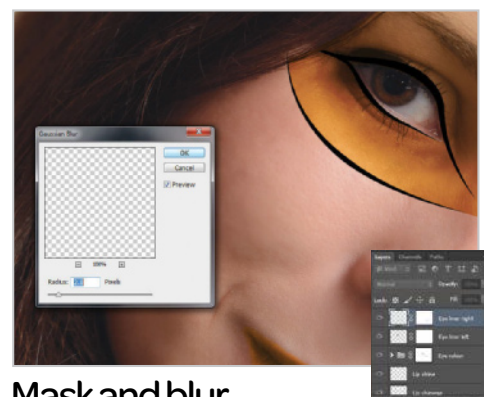
Stroke with Brush

10 Select the Brush tool (B), and choose the CS Tapered End brush with black as the colour and 25px in size. In the Paths palette, hold Alt and click 'Stroke path with brush'. Tick Simulate Pressure and click OK.



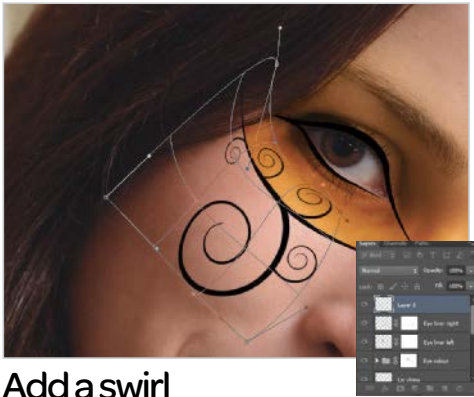
Add more eyeliner

11 Repeat this process to add the lines along the bottom lid (20px) and along the underneath of the eye colour on the left cheek (20px). Add a new layer, name it Eyeliner Right, and repeat the process for the right eye and cheek.



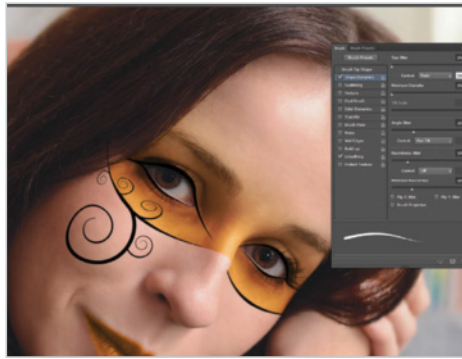
Mask and blur

12 Add masks to the Eyeliner layers, and use a black brush to hide the lines where necessary (such as the nose and extending over the hair). Apply a Gaussian Blur of 2px to the Eyeliner Right layer, and a Gaussian Blur of 0.5px to Eyeliner Left.



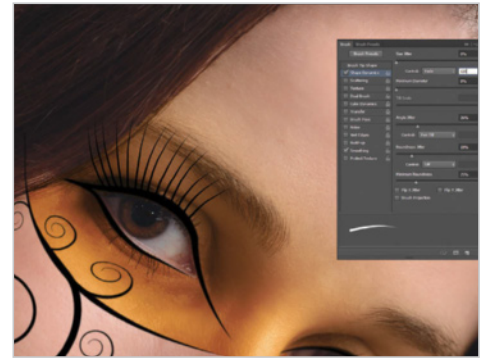
Add a swirl

13 Copy and paste 'swirl.psd' into your image. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T, right-click and choose Flip Vertical. Resize and reposition it on the left cheek. Right-click, choose Warp, and edit it to fit the form of the face and align it with the cheek line. Apply a Gaussian Blur of 1px.



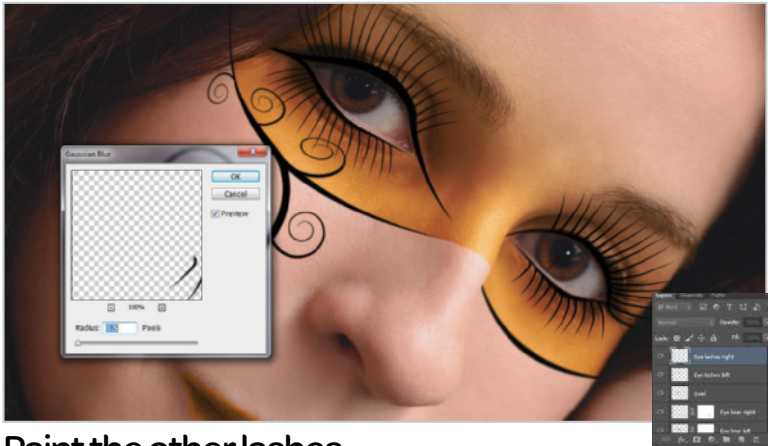
Draw in lashes

14 Add a layer named Lashes Left. Select the Brush tool with CS Lashes brush. Open the Brush palette (go to Window>Brush). In Shape Dynamics, Size Jitter is set to Fade. With 'steps for size fade' set to 200, use quick sweeping motions to draw in lashes on the top-left.



Place extra lashes

15 Reducing the 'steps for size fade' results in shorter lashes. Decrease the figure gradually as you add lashes, creating incrementally shorter lashes as you work your way inwards (such as down to 180, then 150, then 120). Paint in slightly shorter lashes on the bottom lid than on the top.



Paint the other lashes

16 Add a new layer named Lashes Right, and repeat the previous method to paint lashes on the right eye, again making them longer on the outside and top eyelid, and shorter on the bottom. Apply a Gaussian Blur of 0.5px. Set all lashes layers to Multiply and 75% Opacity.



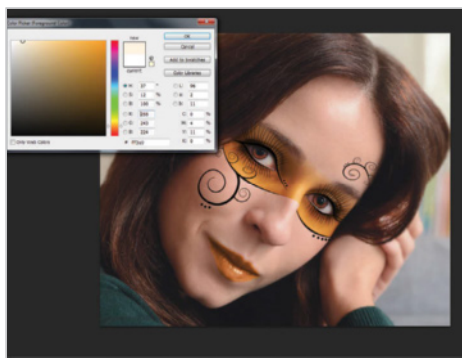
Add a swirl and dots

17 Paste in another swirl, press Cmd/Ctrl+T and change the size, angle and position so it fits the forehead. Right-click, choose Warp and edit it to follow the curve of the head. Use a black, hard-edged brush to paint in the decorative dots. Apply a Gaussian Blur of 1px.



Whiten the eyes

18 Use the Dodge tool set to 50% Opacity on the edited background layer to brighten the eyes. Add a new layer at the top of the layer stack, set it to Screen and use a white airbrush to paint in reflective dots on the eyes.



Apply some shimmer

19 Add a new layer, name it Shimmer, set the blending mode to Soft Light and use the CS Shimmer brush with R:255 G:243 B:224 and 10px to add a subtle amount of glitter over the eye colour area and swirls, erasing any that goes over the eyes.



Add an adjustment layer

20 Add a Curves adjustment layer at the top of the layer stack, click in the middle and drag upwards slightly to brighten. Click towards the lower end of the line and drag down to deepen the shadows.



Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

How to create 3D text, use texture mapping and use the Clone Stamp tool



Time taken
1 hour

Expert

Kirk Nelson



"I admire those who can create artwork with a pair of hedge trimmers, and figured I can use Photoshop to make it look like I know what to do! I'm a professional graphics artist with 20 years of experience in photomanipulation and digital illustration. At the heart of it, though, I'm just your friendly neighbourhood graphics geek."

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative

Create 3D hedge text

Use some creative techniques to create text out of hedges

Have you ever admired the amazing hedge sculptures found in theme parks, resorts or hotels? Just imagining the sheer amount of work required is enough to intimidate most people. But that doesn't mean you have to miss out; in fact, you can accomplish hedge-sculpture effects with Photoshop that are impossible in real life. Pixels are much easier to shape than branches!

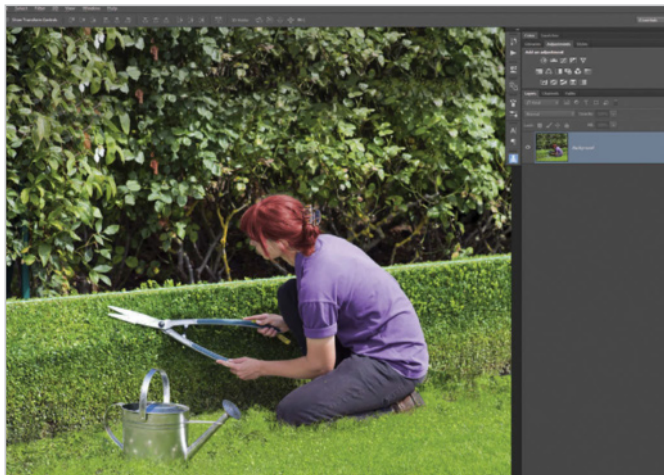
In this tutorial we will demonstrate how to use some basic 3D tools to craft text into a hedge. The process is surprisingly straightforward, so don't be

intimidated by the idea of the 3D tools. They are only used to get a good shape for the final effect. In fact, Photoshop Elements doesn't even have 3D tools and requires a clever layer-based workaround.

The goal of the tutorial is to show a method of quickly and easily generating a text-shaped hedge effect. While the steps are specifically written for this image, the same techniques can be applied to your own images. Use it to convince your social-media friends that you are a far better gardener than you really are!



Start image



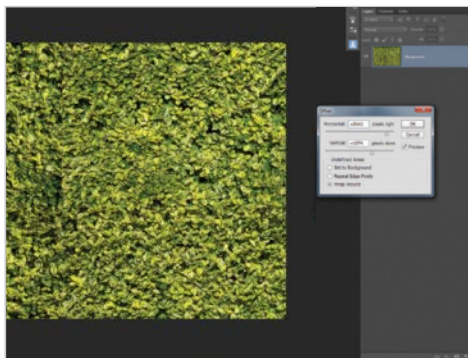
Open the starter photo

01 Start off by downloading the start image; you will find this on the FileSilo and it is called 'StarterHedgesPhoto.jpg'. Now open this in Photoshop or Photoshop Elements.



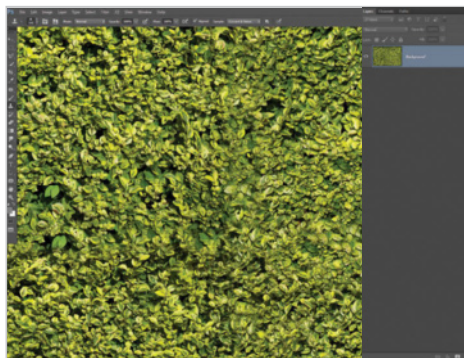
Create the basic text

02 Use the Type tool to add a basic line of text. Choose a plain, bold typeface that is thick and blocky and serif-free. We used Impact and a pale green colour to start with. Reduce the tracking between the letters until the letters almost touch.



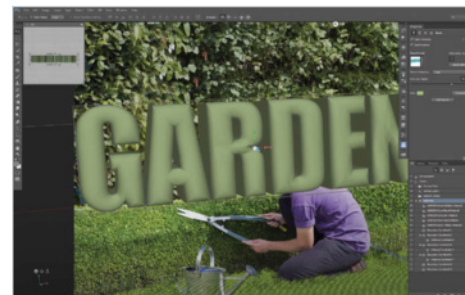
Access the hedge image

03 Open the image called 'hedge-1981.jpg' from the FileSilo. This will serve as the hedge texture for the letters, but it needs to be seamless. Go to Filter>Other>Offset and adjust the sliders until the edge seams are clearly visible.



Paint out the seams

04 Use the Clone Stamp tool to paint out the hard seams. Be sure to use multiple sample points so the clone work has no noticeable repetition. When finished, save the image as 'HedgeTexture.jpg' and close the file.



Create 3D text

05 Select the text layer and go to 3D>New 3D Extrusion from Selected Layer to create 3D blocks. Use the Inflate preset and set the Extrusion Depth to 90px. Adjust the Current View so the text fits along the top of the hedge. (Elements users: check the boxout on the last page for a workaround and skip to step 9.)



Assign texture maps

06 Expand the 3D text layer and select the Inflation material. Click on the Diffuse folder icon and choose Load Texture to load the 'HedgeTexture.jpg'. Click it again for Edit UV Properties. Adjust the Scale and Tile values until the texture appears as a realistic size. Do the same for the Bevel and Extrusion materials.



Adjust the 3D lighting

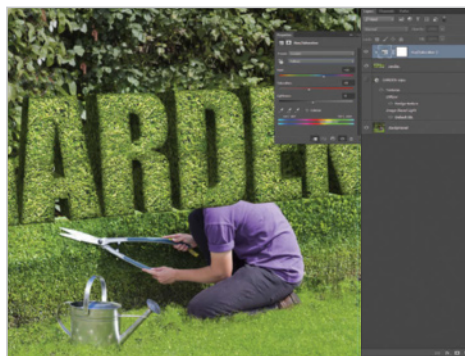
07 Click the Lights icon in the 3D panel and select the Infinite Light. Use the 3D light widget to adjust the direction of the light to match up with the apparent direction found in the photo. Set the light Intensity to 100% and the Shadow to 10%.





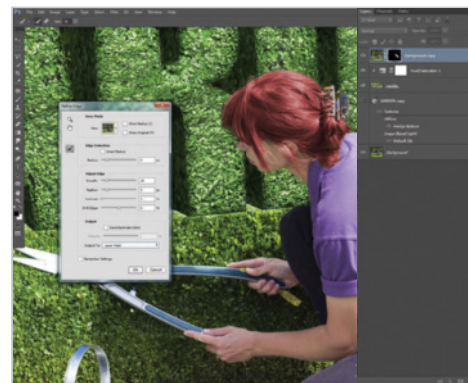
Render

08 Create a rectangular selection around the letters and hit the Render button. When Photoshop is done rendering (it could take a while), duplicate and rasterize the 3D layer. This way the render is preserved as a regular layer, but the original 3D layer is still live.



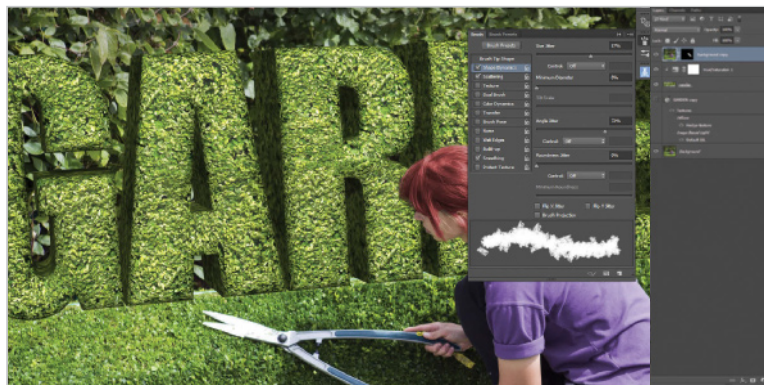
Adjust the colour

09 Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer and clip it to the rendered text layer with Layer>Create Clipping Mask. Then set the target to Yellows and reduce the Hue to +21, Saturation to -19, and Lightness to -8. This helps the rendered letters to match the colour of the photo hedges.



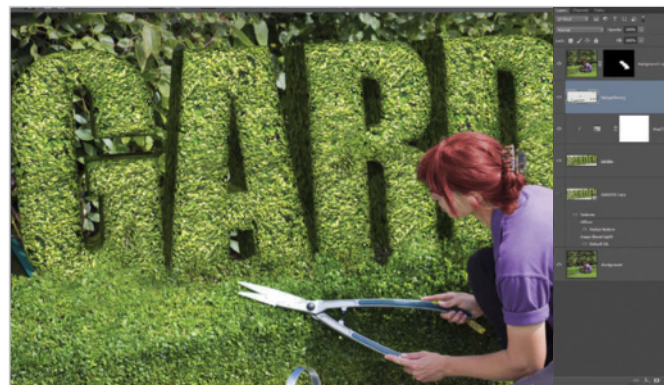
Place the gardener in front

10 Duplicate the Background layer and move it to the top of the stack. Use the Quick Selection tool to select the gardener's head and shoulders. Use the Refine Edge feature to smooth and feather the selection and use it as a layer mask.



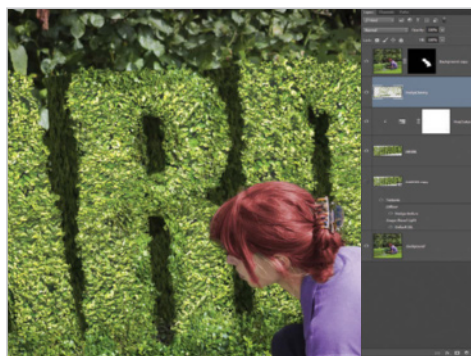
Save a new brush preset

11 Elements users can skip this step. Open the Brush panel and select the Chalk 30 preset. Engage the Shape Dynamics and set the Size Jitter to 57% and Angle Jitter to 72%. Engage the Scattering and set the Scatter to Both Axes at 166%. Save this new Brush Preset as 'HedgesCloningBrush'.



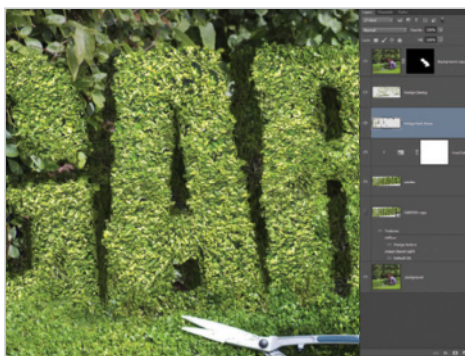
Blend in the letters

12 Create a new layer called Hedge Cloning. Use the Clone Stamp tool with the new brush preset you just created. Sample pixels from the lower hedge and clone over the bottom of the letters to blend them in with the real hedge. (Elements users: pick the Chalk brush tip.)



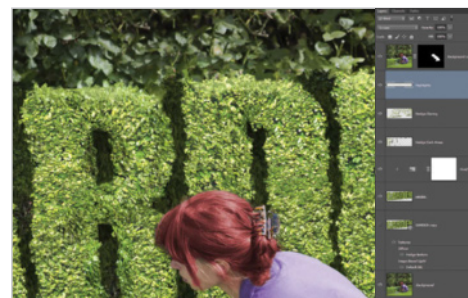
Treat the edges

13 Use the same Clone Stamp brush to work the front edges of the letters to disrupt the smooth, straight lines of the rendered letters. Sample from several different areas in order to prevent any recognisable repetition.



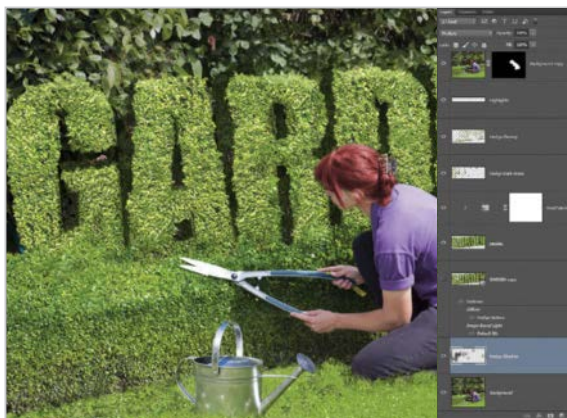
Tidy the letter sides

14 Add a new layer beneath the clone layer. Use this layer to focus on cloning out the sharp lines of the darker areas along the sides of the 3D letters. Be sure to sample from the sides so the shading matches up.



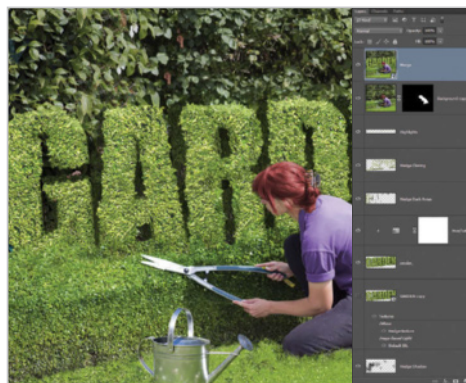
Add hedge highlights

15 Add a new layer for highlights and set the blend mode to Screen. Use the regular Brush tool with the Hedges Cloning Brush preset created earlier. (Elements users: use the Chalk brush with some Scattering.) Set brush Opacity to 60% and use a light green paint colour to add highlights along the tops of the letters.



Apply a shadow

16 Create a new layer under the rendered text layer for the shadows. Set the blend mode to Multiply and continue to use the same brush preset. But this time set the colour to a very dark green to paint a dark shadow area behind the letters.



Create a merged layer

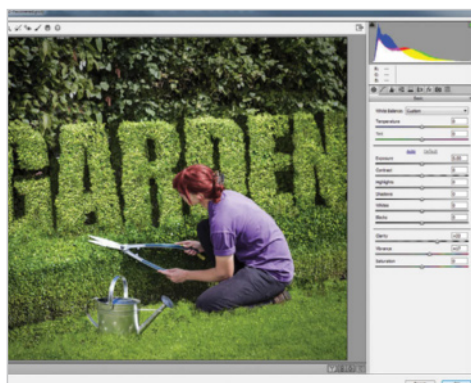
17 Go to the top layer and create a merged layer above that by holding down the Alt/Opt key and going to Layer>Merge Visible. Then convert this layer to a Smart Object. (Elements users: ignore the Smart Object.)

Expert tip



Use the Iris Blur filter

Compositing a rendered element into a photograph is frequently difficult due to the fact that the rendered element doesn't share the same focal blur that naturally appears in the photograph. This can make it obvious that the image has been edited. You can compensate for this by using the Filter>Blur Gallery>Iris Blur. Place the centre of the effect on the photo's focal point and then expand the ring and blur amount until the blur matches the photo.



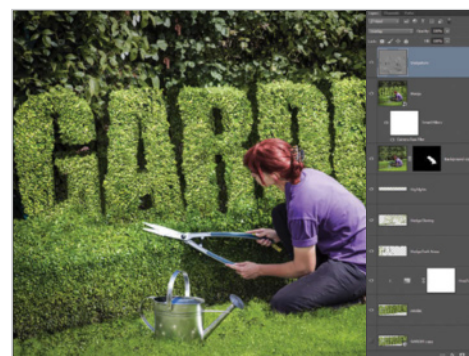
Run the Camera Raw filter

18 Elements users get to skip this step. Run the Camera Raw filter and in the Basic tab, increase the Clarity to +33 and the Vibrance to +17. In the Effects tab set the Post Crop Vignette Amount to -26.



Add a vignette in Elements

19 Elements users only: instead of the Camera Raw filter, go to the Guided edit module and use the Vignette Effect to add a Black Vignette and set the Intensity to about halfway.



Dodge and Burn

20 Add a new layer to the top and use Edit>Fill to fill it with 50% Grey. Then use the Dodge and Burn tools with a soft brush, Range set to Midtones and Exposure at 10%. Use these to accentuate the highlights and shadows in the image.

Elements users

3D workaround

Photoshop Elements doesn't have any 3D tools like Photoshop, so it's necessary to get clever with the layers to achieve a similar effect. Start with the same simple text layer, but transform and skew it to fit along the top of the bushes. Then place the hedge's texture as a layer above the text. Cmd/Ctrl-click the text to create a selection and press Cmd/Ctrl+J to copy the selection to a new layer. Make a second copy that fits behind the first and move it down and to the left. Then use Enhance>Adjust Lighting>Brightness/Contrast to darken it.

PATTERN-FILLED TEXT

Top text layer is created by using a text-shaped selection to copy pixels from the texture layer. Be sure to hide the original text and texture layers.



FAUX 3D EFFECT

By placing a copy of the text layer behind the first and off to the side, a slight lighting adjustment provides a 3D-ish effect.

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Elements creative

Elements



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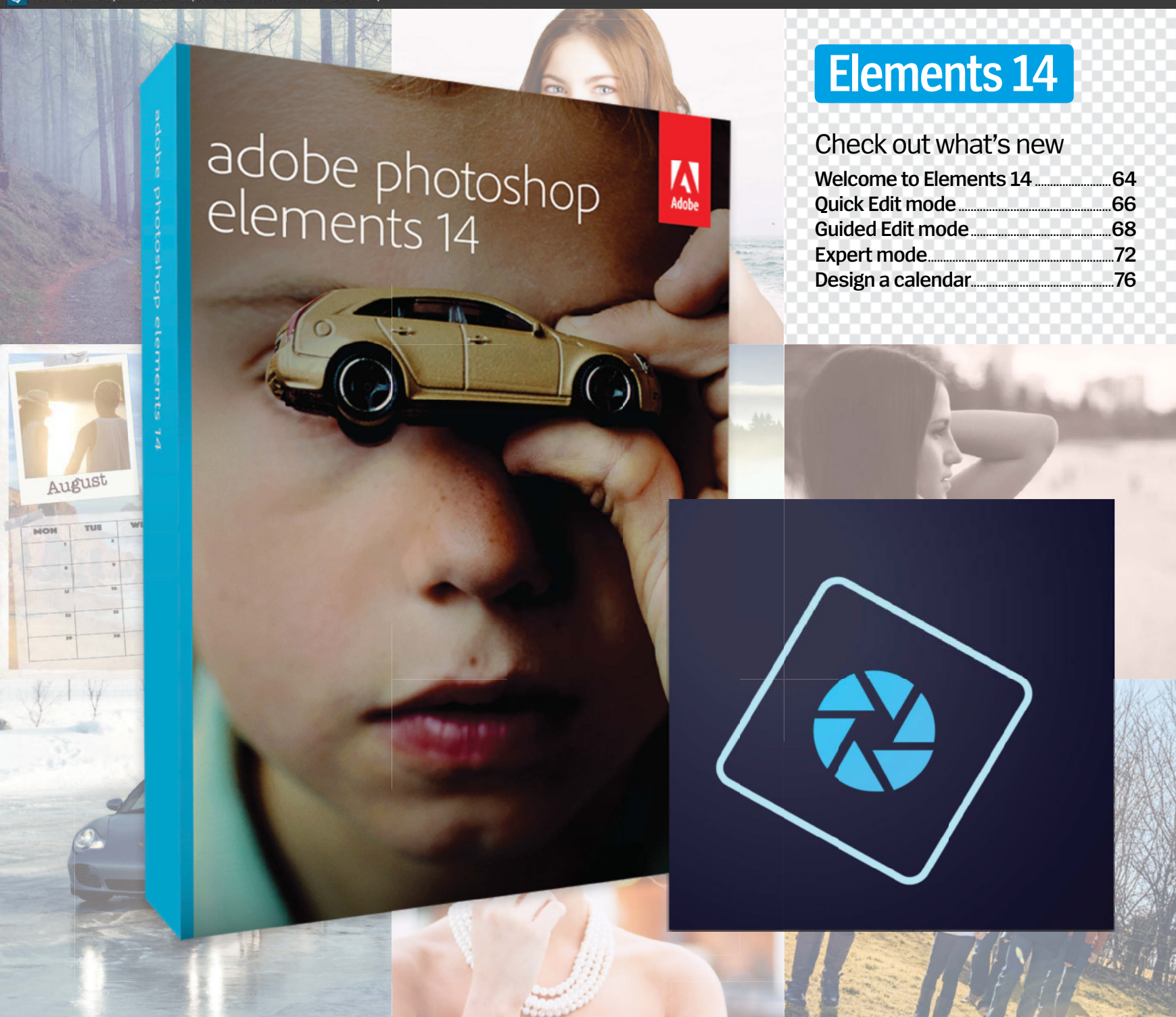
**Essential
tool guides**
New features
and updates
revealed!

File Edit Image Enhance Layer Select Filter View Window Help

Elements 14

Check out what's new

Welcome to Elements 14	64
Quick Edit mode	66
Guided Edit mode	68
Expert mode	72
Design a calendar	76



Welcome to Elements 14

Categorise your pictures by people, place and time with the all-improved Elements

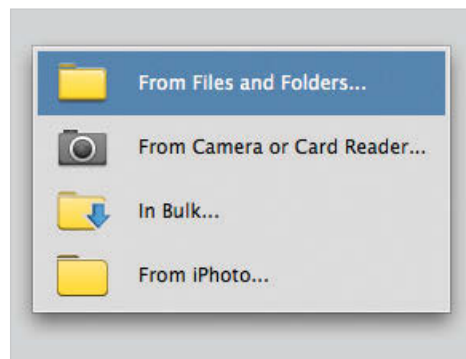
Photoshop Elements is the perfect option for anyone just getting to grips with photo editing, and Elements 14 is the biggest and most complete version of the software yet, with brand new tools scattered across the program, and all the old favourites revamped.

Though the sleek, grey design of the program has remained, this new edition of Elements seems a lot more visual than it ever has been. It's much easier to find pictures in the Organizer section of the software with added People, Places and Events capabilities, and this new aesthetic continues into the Quick and Guided sections of Elements. There are new tools, but Elements 14 is more of a gentle revolution than anything radical, with the program simply moving more in line with Photoshop and Adobe's other apps. Elements 14 is a program for mobile users as much as photographers, and this version is packed full of great new tools for imaginative projects.

The best place to start, though, is right at the beginning. The Organizer is the ideal tool to sort and categorise all your pictures, so let's delve into the starting point of any Elements user's editing experience.

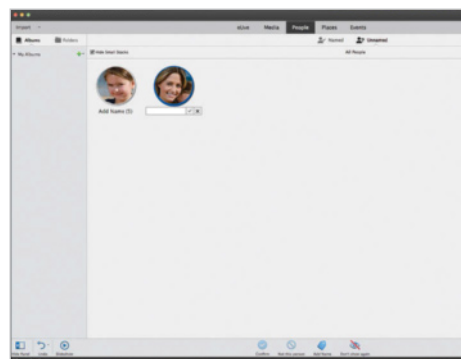


Using the Organizer How can you catalogue your photos?



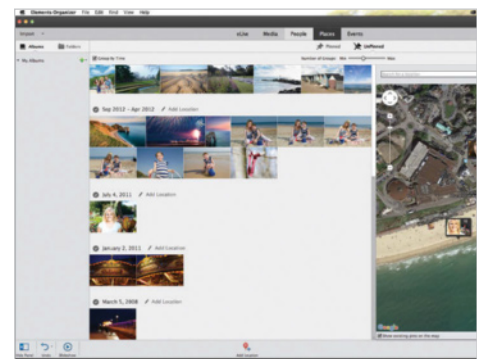
Import

Start off by heading to the top-left of the Organizer and then selecting a set of files or folders to import into the program. Organizer will automatically sort your pictures by time, and then it will group shots that were taken together at similar periods.



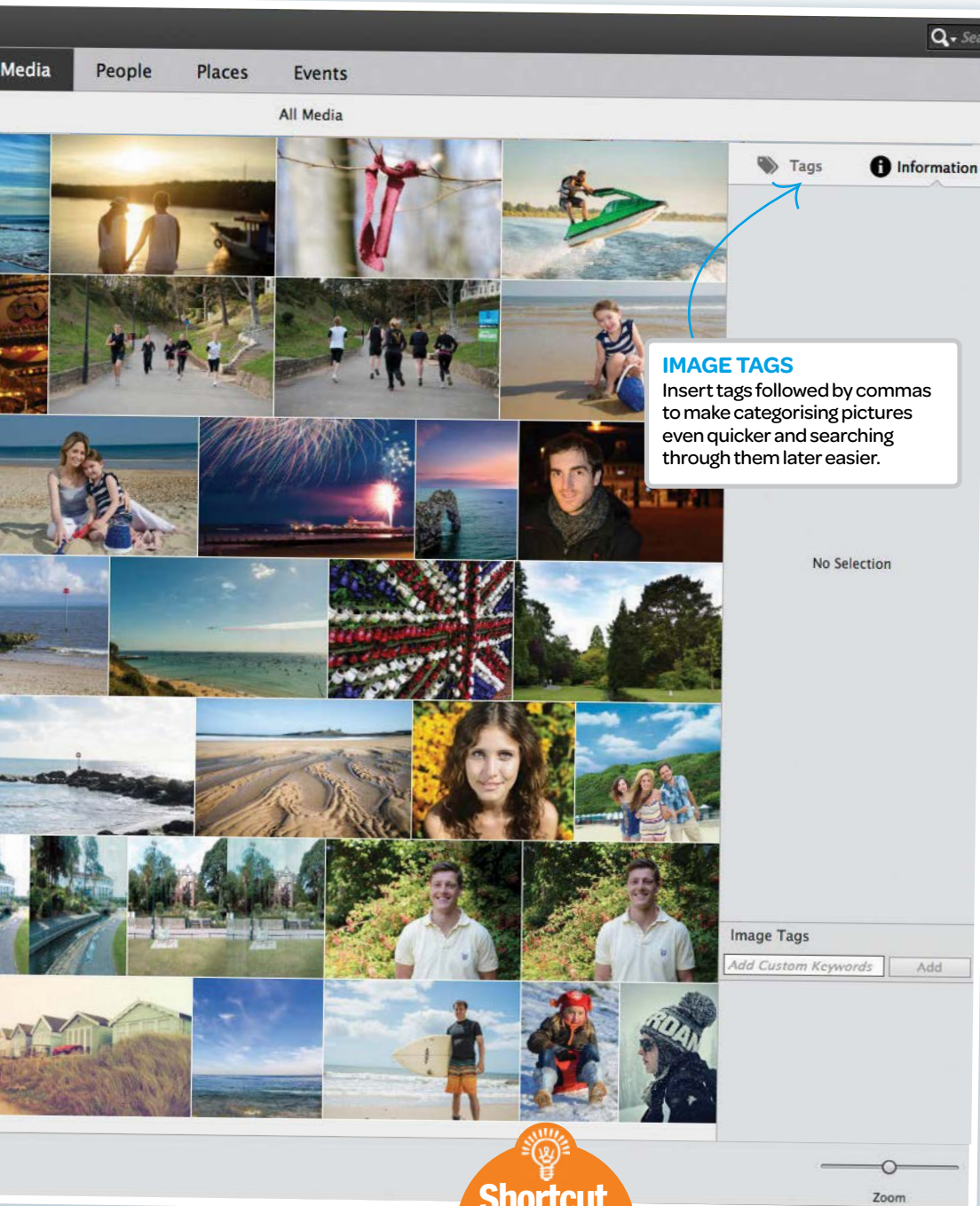
People

Sort pictures by the people in the shots. Organizer automatically recognises similar faces, and then groups pictures accordingly. You can add people by double-clicking the pictures and entering names. Roll over people to view all pictures featuring them.

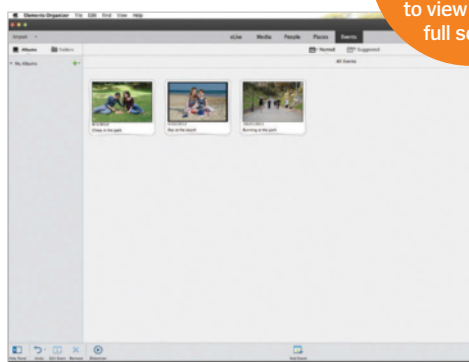


Places

Organizer recognises pictures taken during the same day as probably having been taken at the same place. You can input exactly where these pictures were taken and then drag them onto a map to visually place your albums all over the world.

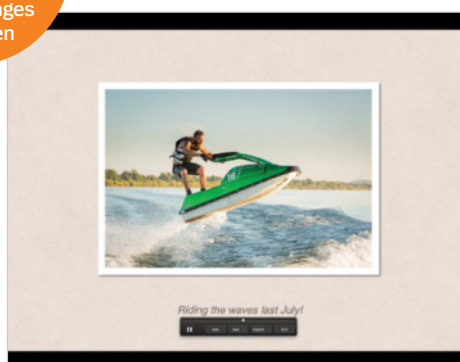


Shortcut
Press **Cmd+F11** (Mac) or **F11** (PC) to view images full screen



Events

In addition to placing where your pictures were taken and who was featured in them, you can assign specific events to your pictures to make them even easier to find. Roll over events to view all the pictures taken from that time.



Slideshow

As a nice touch, once you've ordered your pictures into categories, you can view them all in a slideshow afterwards. This comes accompanied by music on your computer, and will display any captions that you've given your pictures.

FAQ



Will I be able to access Adobe Stock within the new version of Elements?

At the time of writing, Elements 14 doesn't incorporate the option to import photos purchased via Adobe Stock. Though Adobe is keen to improve the Creative Cloud's interconnectivity, Elements isn't actually available on CC. It's a standalone program, so it wouldn't make sense to link it intrinsically to other CC products; this isn't to say it will never become a member of the Creative Cloud family, though. If you wish to use Adobe Stock pictures, you can simply download individual ones from www.stock.adobe.com.

What is Premiere Elements?

Just as Photoshop Elements is a scaled-down version of Photoshop CC, Premiere Elements has a similar relationship with Adobe Premiere CC. Premiere is a video-editing program, and as a brand new feature this year, it launches from the same menu as Organizer and Photoshop Elements. This is just another example of Adobe's interconnectivity; you can export pictures for use in Premiere Elements, and store videos in your Organizer.

Is there any way for me to get my pictures from my iPhone to Elements?

With Creative Cloud, you simply have to upload pictures to the Cloud, and download them straight back down to the desktop Photoshop. With Photoshop Elements, it's much more like a traditional digital camera: connect your iPhone to your computer, and there's an option within Organizer to download images via iPhoto. It's easy to connect and doesn't need drivers.

What new features has Adobe added for smartphone photographers?

Adobe has recognised that a lot of pictures its users take are selfies these days. The Shake Reduction Feature in Elements 14 was designed specifically with this phenomenon in mind, but the visual aspect of mapping your pictures in the Organizer is something that will come in handy with your smartphone snaps.

Quick Edit mode

Make simple touch-ups and add filters with a click, using the revamped Quick Edit mode

Modern society can be an incredibly busy place, especially for any budding photographer. These days, you are far more likely to take photographs on the go with your smartphone than you are to make time for a day out with the digital camera, and more and more people upload pictures straight to social media, rather than importing them onto their computer.

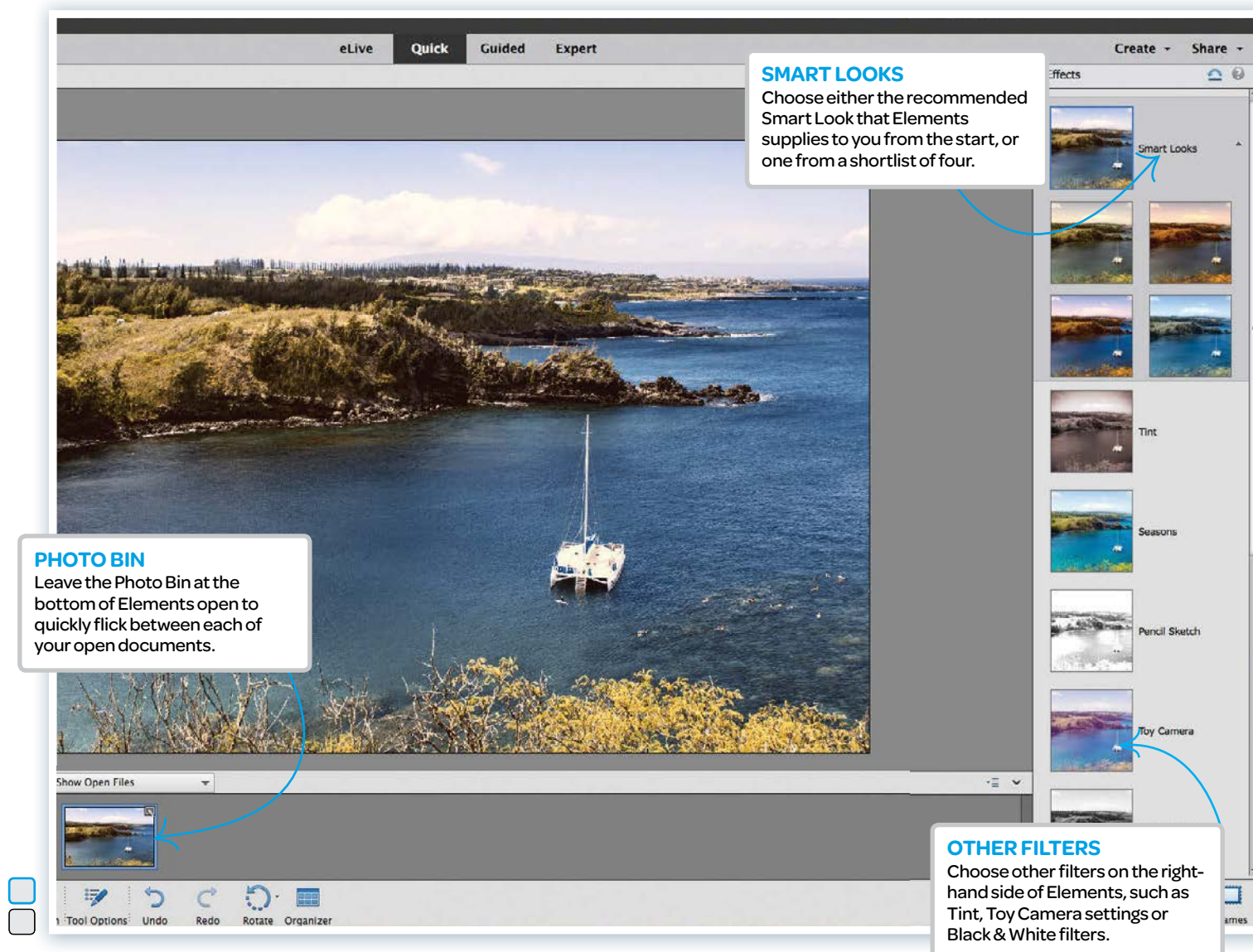
But it isn't just the process of taking images which has shifted over recent years. The modern photo-editing process is having to play catch-up to our own hectic schedules, and the Quick Edit mode of Photoshop Elements certainly has a role to play in all of that. For quite a while now, it has been the go-to place to make simple tweaks

to your pictures without being a massive drain on your time. With Elements 14 however, it is even more intuitive and capable of creating wonderful and unique pieces of art.

Open your picture, head to the Quick Edit section of Elements and you'll notice the new Smart Looks feature added to this latest version of the image editor. It's a product of the Instagram generation; it generates five unique filters based on a bank of hundreds, and transforms your shots instantly. It's a great fix, it offers creative and colourful alternatives for your pictures, and the best thing is that it's a speedy answer to anyone who wants (or needs) to edit in a rush.

Expert tip

EDITING FURTHER – Quick Edits are designed to make adjustments with minimal effort, but they are by no means the end of the editing process. Flick between the different modes in order to touch up a picture before you begin more thorough edits, or to apply quick filters to finished compositions.



Use Smart Looks filters

Choose from five pre-picked, perfect filters

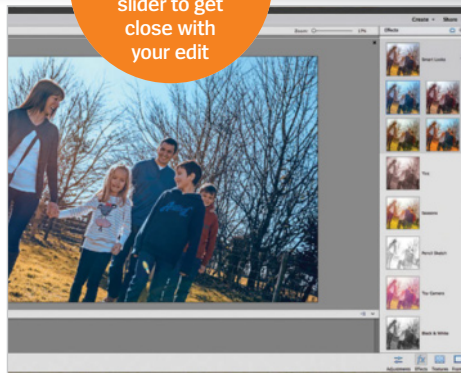
With the arrival of Elements 14 on the scene, it's now easier than ever before to create distinctive effects in the Quick Edit mode.

Smart Looks is a bank of hundreds of filters. When you open a photo in Quick Edit, you'll be shown five possible filters, chosen from this bank especially as filters that will suit your picture. Here, you can have more individuality with photos, as well as edit with speed.



Fix up slightly

01 Start off by making tiny tweaks to your picture as you see fit. This could involve improving the lighting, exposure or colour, or just applying a Smart Fix to your picture. You may not need to make huge changes, as Smart Looks does this too.



Apply a look

02 Click on Smart Looks. Elements will present a filter that it recommends most from its extensive collection, along with four others, based on what will complement this picture in particular. Choose your look by clicking on it.



Edit further

03 If you want to make any further tweaks to this filter, click on the Expert tab at the top of Elements. Your Smart Look is applied as a layer with a mask; this means you can mask out the changes in some places, or reduce the Opacity to lessen the effect.

Fixing with filters Smart Looks can be used for all sorts of edits



Night-time shots

As well as adding colour and tone to pictures, you can fix any underexposure in your pictures with the Smart Looks. Any night-time shot produces a series of Smart Looks that can brighten up your picture, as well as add colour.



Black & whites

Increase the contrast in your black-and-white pictures with Smart Looks, but also add a touch of colour, such as a sepia tone, or just a tint of red or yellow. This can give a classic retro feel, and brighten up monochrome.



Bleached photos

Even washed-out photos can benefit from Smart Looks, which can transform overexposed shots. Smart Looks takes this low contrast into account when producing filters to use for your picture.

Guided Edit mode

Take editing a little further with walkthroughs and basic projects, using the Guided Edit mode of Elements



If you're new to Elements, following a tutorial can seem a little overwhelming. You're just trying to get to the tools, where they are and how to use them, and putting skills into practice can be difficult. The Guided Edit mode of Photoshop Elements is a stepping stone

between one-click photo fixing and an in-depth project. It's more visual than ever in this edition, with previews, not to mention two brand new options: Resizing and the Speed Effect. Let's delve into each of the tabs and explore the Guided Edits.

CORRECT SKIN TONE
Eliminate colour casts in a few clicks, but also remove overly powerful photo filters with the Correct Skin Tone option.

RESIZE YOUR PHOTO
A new feature to Elements 14, Resize Your Photo makes it easy to resize pictures with common specifications.

ENHANCE COLOR
Similar to hitting Cmd/Ctrl+U in Expert Mode, Enhance Color helps you alter the Hue, Saturation and Lightness.

LOMO CAMERA EFFECT
A one-click filter, the effect mimics retro film, and has the option to add a vignette.

BLACK AND WHITE
Quickly turn your pictures into monochrome masterpieces with a click, before adding a diffuse glow and added contrast.

B&W COLOR POP
Try turning an entire picture black and white, except for one specific colour of your choice that you keep.

CROP PHOTO
Square up your picture and project focus elsewhere with a Crop; use the Rule of Thirds to gauge perspective too.

SHARPEN
The Sharpen tool is just one slider, but it can perfect your pictures and make them suitable for editing further.

SATURATED FILM EFFECT
Saturated Film Effect produces a high-contrast, retro-style filter with a click.

REMOVE A COLOR CAST
Similar to Correct Skin Tone, Remove A Color Cast is good for edits that need a slight tweak of hue.

B&W SELECTION
Select objects to turn monochrome and Refine Edge; B&W Selection is similar to Color Pop, it just incorporates more hues.

HIGH KEY
You can use the High Key option to produce high contrast, white-heavy shots, such as studio-shot pictures.

OUT OF BOUNDS

Create a simple out-of-bounds effect by placing a frame and adding shadows and gradients to the composition.

SPEED EFFECT

Another new edit for Elements 14, Speed Effect uses a motion blur and simple masking to create the effect.

DEPTH OF FIELD

A two-part edit, Depth of Field creates a strong blur before adding a focus area to bring subjects back in.

SCRATCHES AND BLEMISHES

This combines Healing and Spot Healing Brushes to give control when editing damaged photos.

PHOTOMERGE® COMPOSE

Move subjects from one picture to another with the Compose tool, and blend them together.

PHOTOMERGE® PANORAMA

Take shots and merge to make one long panorama; there's a similar tool in Photoshop CC 2015.



Fun Edits

PICTURE STACK

Create a Hockney-esque photo collage from one picture; turn your shot into a stack of four, eight or 12 pictures.

PUZZLE EFFECT

Create an effective jigsaw pattern from your photo, complete with scattered puzzle pieces across the picture.



Special Edits

RESTORE OLD PHOTO

Restore Old Photo brings retouching tools together, like the Spot Healing brush and the Clone Stamp.

RECOMPOSE

Recompose clears dead space in your pictures. Similar to Content-Aware tools, it brings subjects closer together.



Photomerge®

PHOTOMERGE® SCENE CLEANER

Use Scene Cleaner to choose the best bits from a series of pictures to create one finished shot.

PHOTOMERGE® GROUP SHOT

Choose the best subjects from photos taken in quick succession, and merge into one picture.

Layer edits Build multiple guided edits in one project

It's easy to apply more than one Guided Edit to your project. Once you've added one, you'll be left with the option to either go to Quick or Expert modes, or just click the Done tick. Do this, and you'll be taken back to Guided Edit; here we've applied colour effects and an Out of Bounds before cropping. The use of multiple edits gives you even more creative possibilities.



What does it mean?

PHOTOMERGE® – Photomerge® combines features from a series of photos into one finished picture. Most commonly it's used to create panoramas by stitching together overlapping photos, but the principles of the tools still apply to other projects. Use it to extract anything from any image.

PROJECT 1

Master Motion Blur

Throw some blur into dramatic shots

Blurs are some of the most useful filters you can apply to a picture, and the Motion Blur is no different. It can add drama and excitement to your pictures, but it can be difficult to judge subtlety with them.



Make a selection

01 Use the Quick Selection tool to make an outline around the object in your picture that you want to apply the Motion Blur to. You can vary the brush size, and add and subtract from the selection with the tools on the right-hand panel.



Add Speed Effect

02 Begin by increasing or decreasing the speed effect in your picture, and rotate the angle so that you have a convincing, realistic blur in your image. Don't worry about obscuring areas – these will be masked away in the next couple of steps.



Set the Focus Area

03 Dragging a single line across your picture, focus the blur you've just created and mask away any excess. Consider that the blur should be coming from the direction the object is travelling from, not going towards it.



Use Refine Effect

04 Concentrate the effect even further by using the Refine Effect step. This works similarly to a brush masking out the blur; you can alter the size and opacity of your brush, and touch-up the blur that you've made in your picture.

QUICK MODE

Remember to apply a subtle crop or filter – such as Smart Looks – to your picture before you begin the editing.

EXPERT MODE

Refine the effect further in the Expert mode. You can tweak the effect's opacity or alter your masking brush.



SUITABLE IMAGES

Try to pick an image with a degree of motion involved when adding the effect, such as a vehicle or even a running subject.

NEXT

Once you have finished adding the effect, use Next to either save the work or carry on editing in the Guided mode.

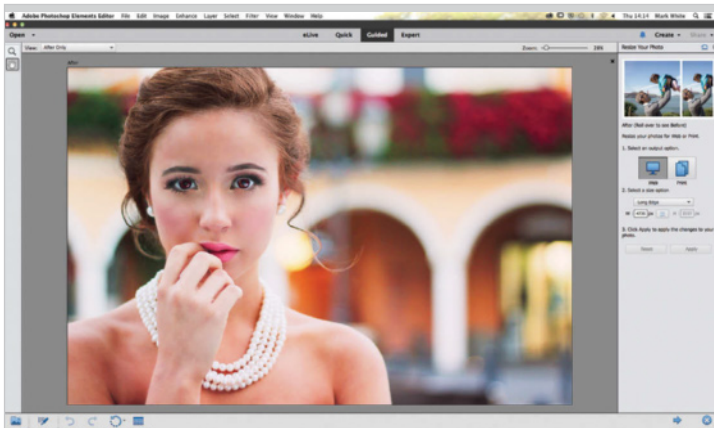
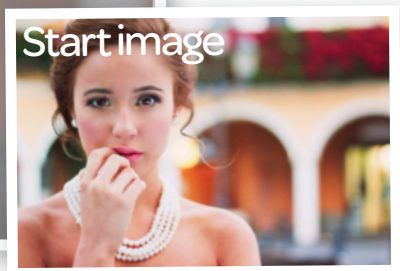
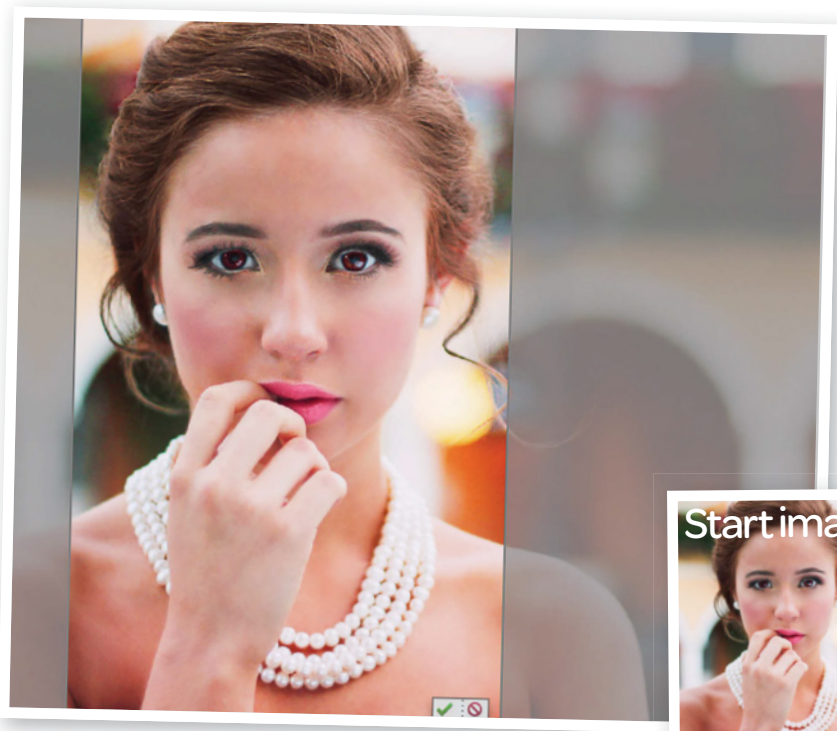
PROJECT 2

Use Resize Your Photo

Discover perfect dimensions with this Guided Edit

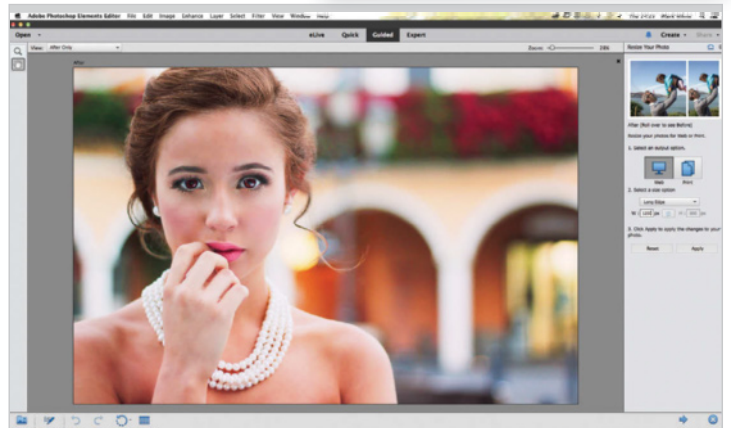
Photographers need to work to a frame. Cropping is important in establishing focus and clarity with your photos, but if you're displaying your pictures, the sizing is just as important. If your picture is sized incorrectly, either on web or printed out, you risk pixilation or a lack of clarity. Let's look at how to prevent this with a simple, yet powerful, new feature of Elements.

Shortcut
Pressing Alt+Cmd/
Ctrl+C shows
you the Canvas
Size



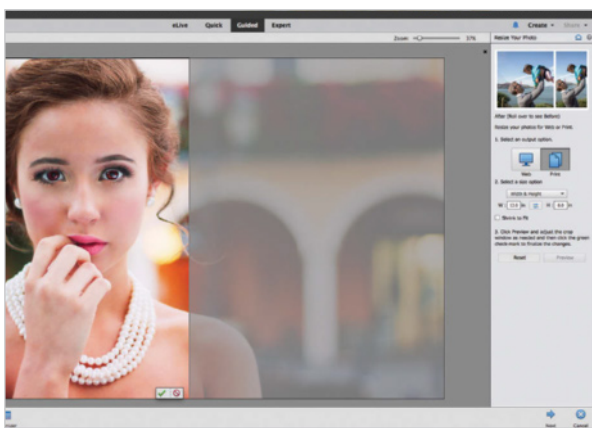
Select an output option

01 Decide whether you're going to use your picture for web or print. If you're choosing web, you'll be prompted to choose the size in pixels, but for print, you'll have to choose how big you want the picture to be in inches.



Choose the size

02 You can choose whether you want to change the size of the longest edge or shortest edge of your picture. This enables you to resize to a specific size without having to crop the picture to an exact measurement on both sides.



Crop it

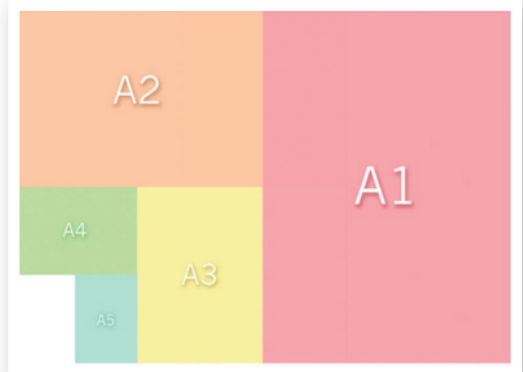
03 Should you want to crop to a specific width and height, you can still crop your picture before you resize. You can even choose to resize your picture to a specific file size, should you need to.

Specific sizes

How big shall I resize my picture?

What size you crop your picture to will be dictated by how it is going to be used, but there are some common paper sizes. International A4 measures at 210x297mm (8.3x11.7in); Standard 135 film in the US measures 101x152mm (4x6in) and many photographers use 203x254mm (8x10in).

But no matter what size you are cropping to, it's useful to remember that standard international paper sizes remain the same ratio, and fit inside each other, as you can see on this picture.





Expert tip
USING EXPERT MODE – The Expert mode is great for precision edits, and it's good if you want to enhance a picture you've edited in Quick or Guided mode. The Expert mode is handy for spending longer on your work. The Layers palette enables you to work non-destructively, and there's a wealth of tools to retouch anything.

Expert mode

Take your editing to the max and discover new tools with the Expert section of Elements

If you have never used it before, the Expert section of Photoshop Elements might sound a little bit daunting. After all, isn't Elements all about ease of use? Why does it presume you to be an expert? Despite its name though, you really don't have to be a seasoned professional of the program to get a lot of enjoyment out of this mode; a lot of the tutorials you'll find in **Photoshop Creative** can be created there, and it's the mode in which you have the most control and freedom to create.



With Elements 14, there are a few new added features to the Expert section, too. As technology evolves and the cameraphone becomes the snapper of choice for many photography enthusiasts

out and about, Adobe has introduced a shake-reduction feature, specifically designed to combat the unsteady blur that can be caused when taking selfies with your phone. There's a new Haze Removal tool too, just like the one added to the Camera Raw filter in CC earlier this year. Selections have also become even easier with new Fine Detail capabilities in the Selection Brush. Great news for anyone who struggles with perfect cutouts.

The idea of becoming an Elements expert might be a little intimidating if you're a photo-editing beginner, but the Expert mode need not be; it's packed full of features and tools to make your editing experience simple and creative.

PROJECT 1

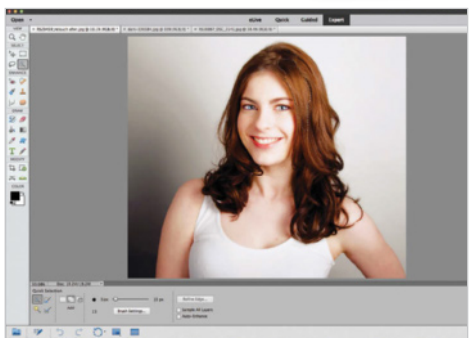
Select with Fine Detail

Select hair meticulously with the selection tools

Hair can be difficult to select at the best of times, and that's why Adobe has made it even easier to select fine details with Elements 14.

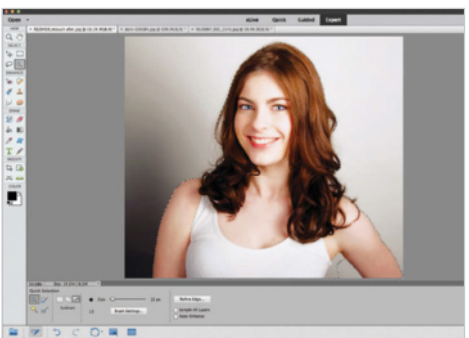
The Selection brush now comes with Fine Detail, which means you can add and subtract elements of hair or fur simply by brushing, and Elements will intelligently recognise the outlines. Check out how to cut out subjects with more accuracy below.

Shortcut
Use the [and] keys to alter brush width up and down



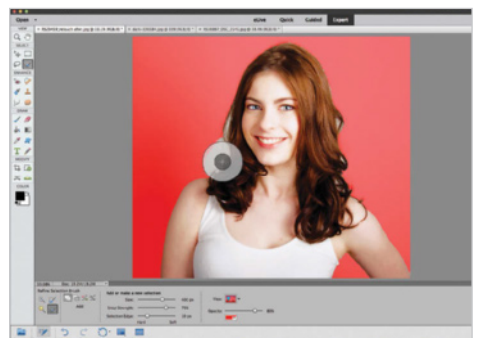
Select your subject

01 Start off by grabbing the Quick Selection tool. The Quick Selection is rough enough to make a basic selection subject before you refine it, so don't worry about being too accurate.



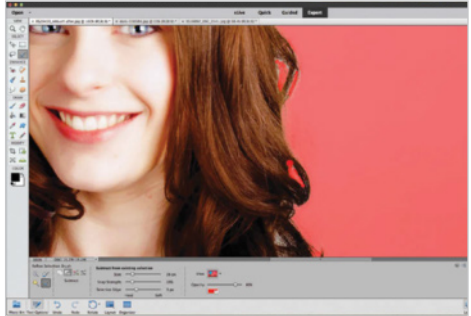
Subtract from the selection

02 Although the roughness of the selection isn't important, you don't want to have lots of excess background for Elements to try and distinguish. Hold Alt/Opt and drag to remove pixels from the selection.



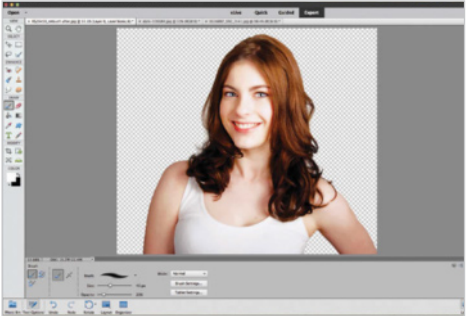
Refine Selection Brush

03 Grab the Refine Selection Brush and start adding stray strands of hair to the selection by painting over the selection. You don't need a big brush; smaller brushes can recognise more detail.



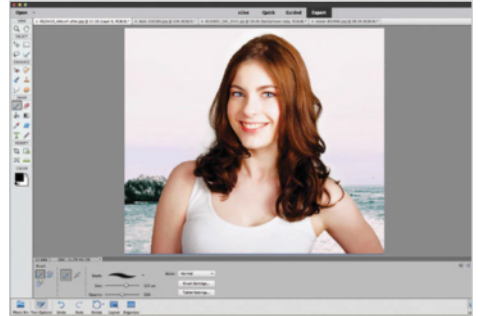
Remove from selection

04 Just as you did with the Quick Selection tool, you can remove pixels from the selection by holding down Alt/Opt. Just gently refine your selection to reveal the hair from the selection and also cut out the excess background.



Mask

05 Once you've finished making your selection, hit the Rectangular Marquee tool just so that you can see where the marching ants are falling around the subject's outline. Once happy with the selection, hit the Mask icon to remove the background.



Add a background

06 Finally, insert a background behind your subject by simply pasting another image behind the original layer. Thanks to the Fine Detail capabilities of Elements, you should find that you have a perfectly feathered selection.



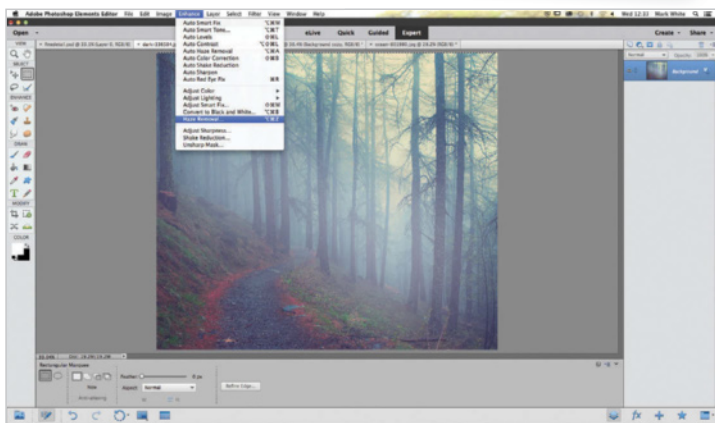
PROJECT 2

How to remove haze

Use the new Haze Removal feature to clear mist

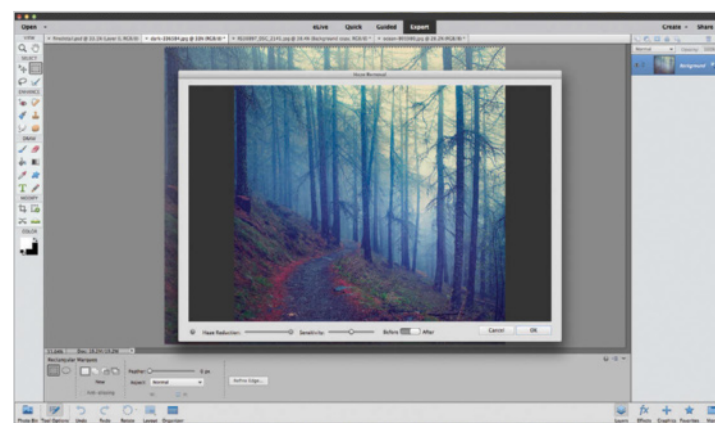
Earlier on in the year, the Camera Raw filter in Photoshop CC was updated with the ability to remove haze. This feature has now arrived in Elements 14, and it makes it even easier to improve the contrast in your pictures.

It couldn't be easier to clean up the fog in your shots; just use the sliders and eliminate any haze with this tool.



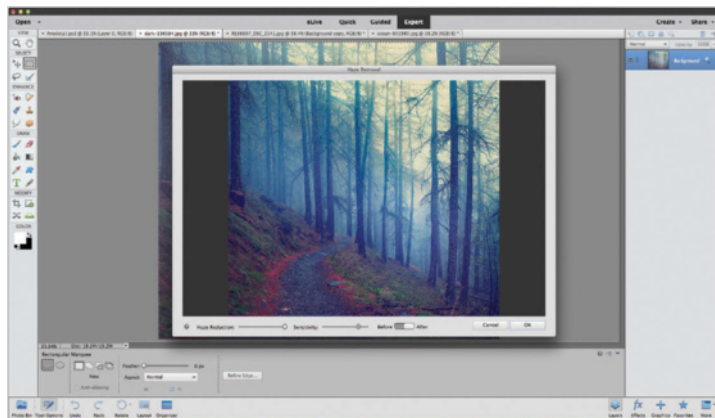
Head to Dehaze

01 Start off with a misty picture, such as this one, and head to Enhance>Haze Removal. You can try Auto Haze Removal, but we're going to go to the main feature for more control and sensitivity when making the edit.



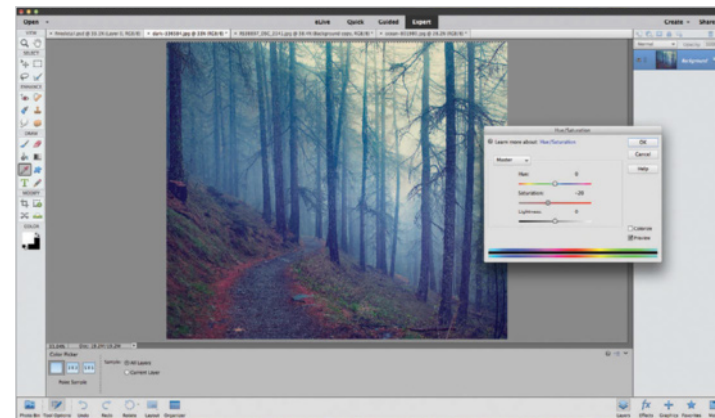
Turn up the reduction

02 In the Haze Removal dialog, you'll notice there are two sliders. Use the one to the left for upping the reduction of the haze until you can noticeably see the light mist in the picture disappearing. Just go slowly until you hit the right amount.



Alter the sensitivity

03 You can also control the sensitivity of the tool, by using the other slider in the dialog. Next to that, there's a before/after switch which you can use to see the difference between your edits as you're making them.



Desaturate slightly

04 Hit Cmd/Ctrl+U to bring up the Hue/Saturation control of your layer. Turn the Saturation down by -20 so that the colours aren't quite so vivid. You can hit Cmd/Ctrl+L to adjust the levels too, if there's too much contrast in your image.

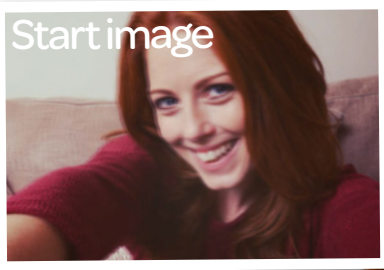
PROJECT 3

Reduce picture shake

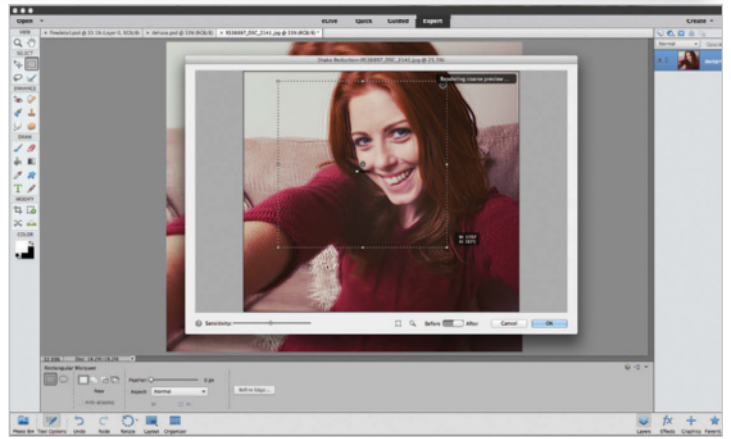
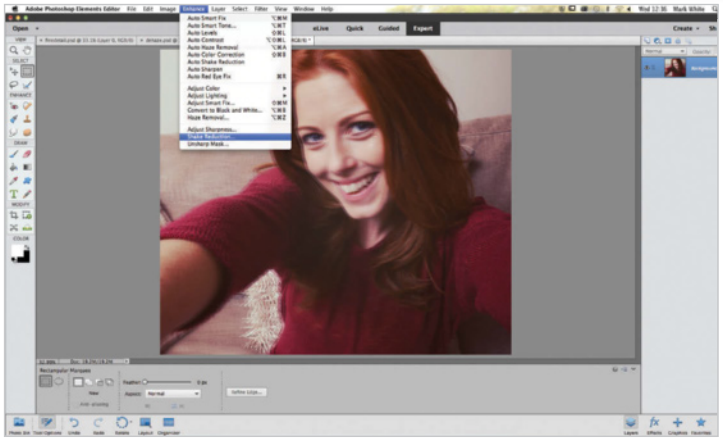
Correct any blurry selfies with Shake Reduction

With technology striding forward in camera phones, and the majority of social-media pictures being taken by the user on their smartphone, Adobe has introduced Shake Reduction into Elements 14 to help correct any blurry edges.

You don't have to just use this feature for selfies. This tool can tweak any blurring, and produce sharper shots in no time.



Shortcut
Enhance>Auto
Shake Reduction
quickly sharpens
all over

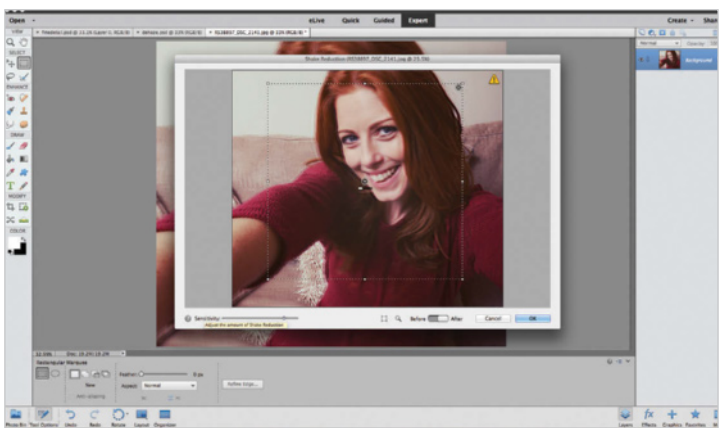


Head to the tool

01 Start off by going to Enhance>Shake Reduction on the top bar to dial up the dialog box. As with Haze Removal, you can use the Auto option, but this way we can have absolute control over where Elements steadies the shot.

Apply the frame

02 Start off by dragging the corners of the frame to set exactly where you want the picture to look the steadiest; this is where the focus of the picture should be, so set the frame over the subject to sharpen them up.



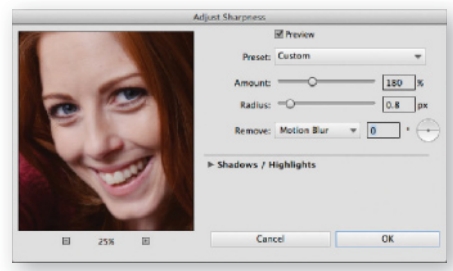
Tweak sensitivity

03 Just as with the Haze Removal tool, you can turn up the sensitivity to produce an even sharper picture. Remember to use the before/after switch to compare the difference between the edits as well, to ensure all is as it should be.

Adjust Sharpness

Take your shake reduction even further

Once you have finished reducing the shake in your picture, you might want to tweak the picture just a little bit more in order to perfect the sharpness; this is what the Expert edit mode is for, after all. This is no problem to do – simply head to Enhance>Adjust Sharpness. Here, you will be able to sharpen the picture by altering the amount of sharpness added to the shot, and by tweaking the Radius you will be able to increase the sharpened amount. Be sure to set it to Motion Blur to fix all of your shaky shots.





USE ANGLES

Position the calendar at an angle rather than straight so it has an interesting scrapbook look rather than a formal one.

Creative project

Design a calendar

Create a personalised calendar to remind you of the great times spent with family and friends

Use Photoshop Elements and a little artistic flair to make a fabulous month-by-month calendar. Using the simple tools Elements offers, you can create stunning gifts for friends and family, have them professionally printed, or use as a monthly screen saver on your digital devices. Elements offers a pre-loaded calendar function that has already been made up for you. Once you have chosen a style, you just import the images into the calendar, but you cannot change the template easily. This tutorial offers a more in-depth way of making your own personal calendar based on what size, colour and

style you fancy producing. If you decide to have it professionally printed, research the size that the printers need the images to be and what format they want the files in for a good crisp result. Set the proportions of your calendar's requirements when making a new file so the images don't stretch or distort in the printing process. Every page can be different and have a multitude of colours, images and effects but most important is to have fun learning a new skill and creating something cool. Look at sites such as www.vistaprint.com or www.colourcalendars.com for professional print options.

STAGE 1

Set up the basics

Lay the foundations of the calendar by adding eye-catching imagery

All projects start out with a background and a setting for all the imagery to sit on top of. Using good background images gives your project something visual from one corner to another, as the top layer of pictures will only stretch so far. Make sure the backgrounds are thought about, as they are just as important as the images found in the foreground.

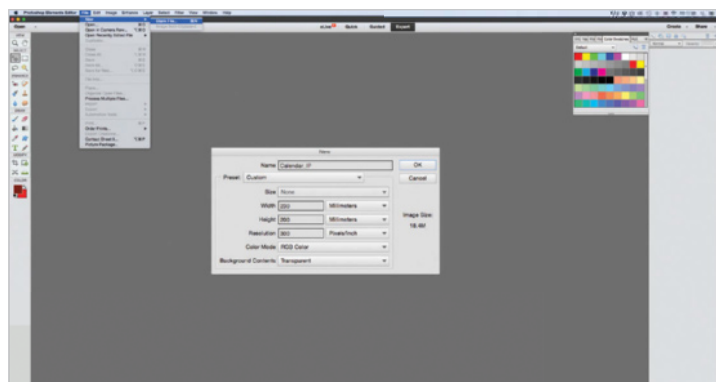
BACKGROUND TEXTURE

Texture is another word for an image that looks like a physical object, for example paper, card or material.



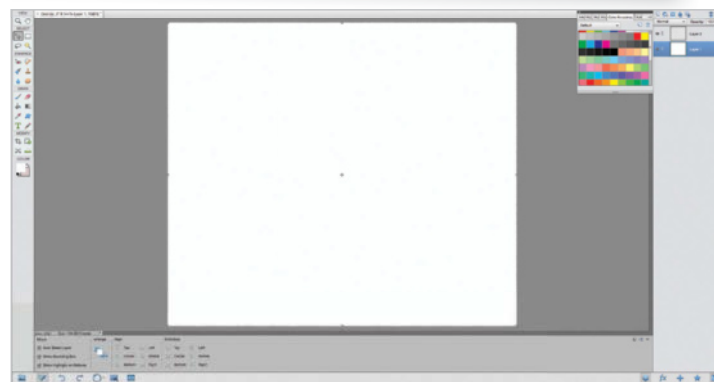
Shortcut

Make PDFs of each calendar month to quickly drop in



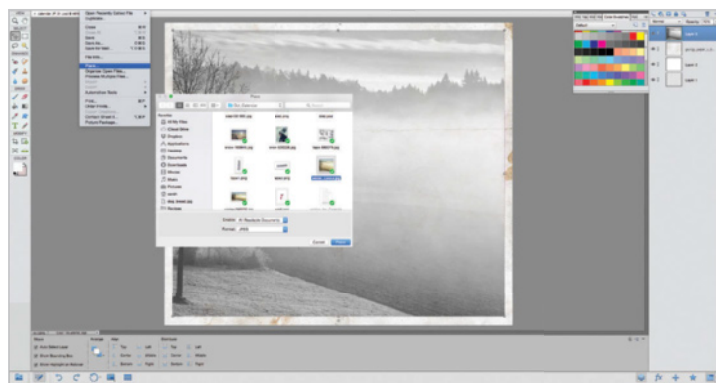
Set it up

01 Open up the Elements editor and go to File>New>Blank file. Type in the size you want and make sure the resolution is set to 300 pixels per inch. This will make the image details more visible when printing the calendar. The lower the PPI, the poorer the image quality.



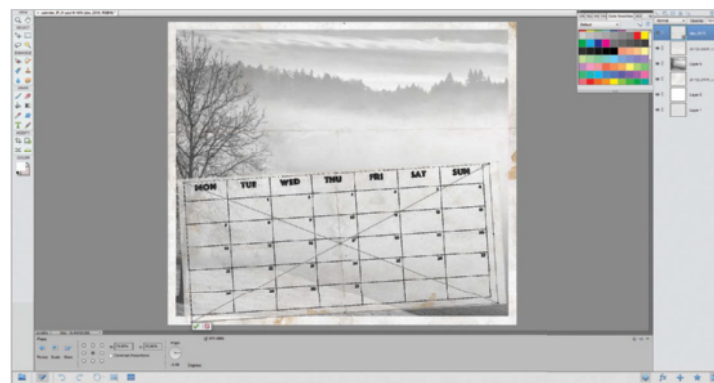
Create a new layer

02 Now using the Paint Bucket tool, fill Layer 1 with the white colour, then go to Layer>New>Layer and click OK. Elements will automatically name it Layer 2 for you. Just make sure that you keep this layer transparent.



Add the background images

03 You will need a background texture and an image to go on top. Go to File>Place and add 'Grunge_texture.jpg'. Then do the same for 'Winter.jpg' but make it slightly smaller, giving it a border to see some of the rough texture underneath.



Add your calendar month

04 Add your calendar by going to File>Place and select 'dec_2015.pdf' or one you have created. Use Cmd/Ctrl>T to resize and position. You can also add another texture underneath so the calendar dates can be seen. File>Place another texture and resize.

STAGE 2

Make Polaroid-style frames

Make your own custom frames to house images

Making Polaroid frames for your images separates them from the calendar's other elements and background images. It creates an individual piece that frees them up for any images you want to use. Make sure the images are related to the months in some way, but experiment with what looks the best, for example, colour or black and white, people or animals, or even places or scenery.



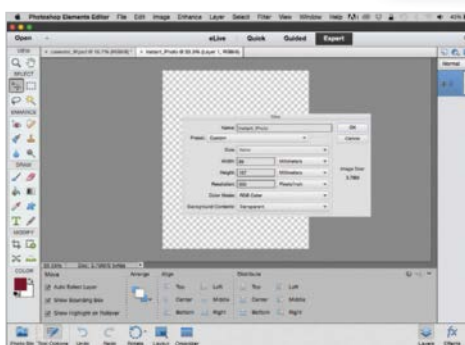
Shortcut

The first month can be a template for the other months



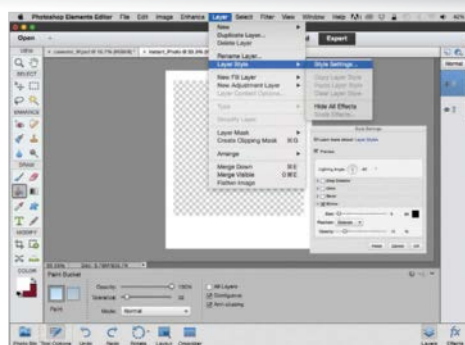
SEE CLEARLY

Never use a font that is difficult to decipher; ensure you use one that is easily readable from a distance.



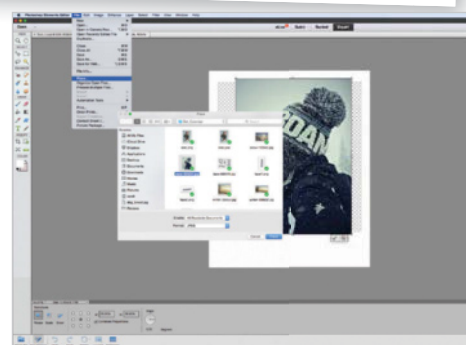
Instant photo frame

01 Open a new file and make it the size of a Polaroid. Create a new layer, fill with a neutral colour. Use the Rectangular Marquee (M) to draw a square for the photo and then use the Eraser (E) to erase the colour from it.



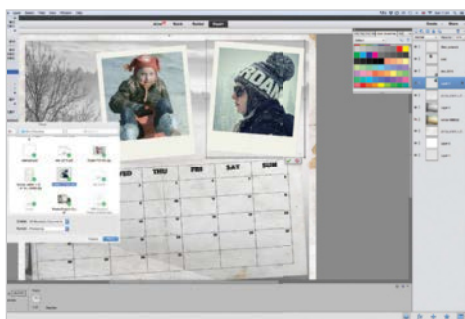
Stroke that style

02 To make the edges stand out use Layer>Layer Style>Style Settings>Stroke. This will add a small outline to the borders and make it look like it is sitting on top of the background rather than part of it.



Add an insert

03 File>Place 'Snow.jpg' in the inner frame. Use Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize by dragging the edges. Click Constrain Proportions at the bottom. Click return when done and save as PSD. Repeat with 'Sled.jpg'.



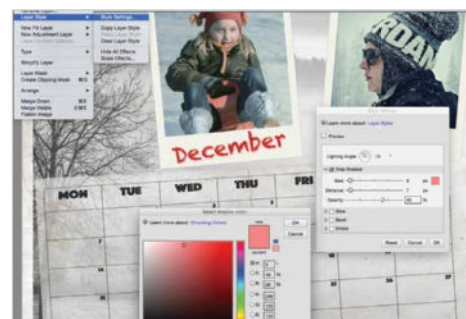
Arrange the images

04 Add your Polaroids using the Place function and make sure the images are situated at the top within the Layers panel. Move the image around the screen by keeping the mouse or trackpad clicked down on the image while moving. Resize and click return.



Add a month and year

05 Now use the Text tool and write out the month and year each on a separate layer. Choose the colour and a size that's big enough to read. Again, make use of the Free Transform tool to move it into your desired position.



Add subtle shadow

06 Add a small amount of drop shadow to the month and year to make it stand out more using Layer>Layer Style>Style Settings>Drop Shadow. Keep the settings low and subtle; this will lift it just enough to be more visual and stand off the frame.

STAGE 3

Add some personality

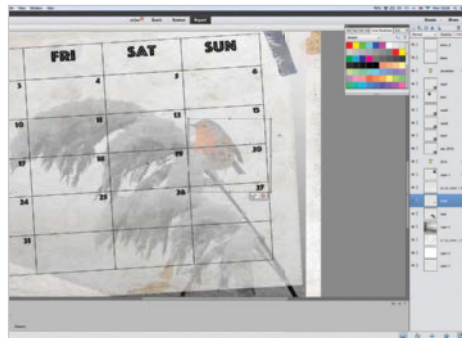
Insert remaining images into the calendar to personalise the rest of the space

You can now add small images to give the calendar personality. The images need to be PNG files so they have no background to them. Use the File>Place function, resize using the corners and drag to position. Move the new image below or above other elements by dragging it around in the Layers panel.



Tape on the images

01 Add some tape to the Polaroids and calendar to make it look like they are taped on. Use File>Place, choose 'Tape.jpg', then resize. Do this for the various images of tape, and turn them around or upside down so it looks like a different piece of tape.



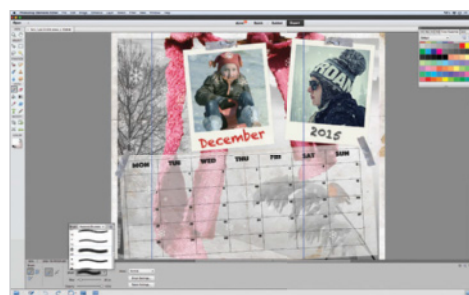
Place the reed and robin

02 Using the same technique as before, place the reed and robin images into the bottom corner. This time in the Layers panel to the right, drag the new images below the calendar layer so they will sit behind it and look faded.



Add a bold colour

03 Add the scarf using the Place tool. Choose a bold colour and sit it behind the Polaroids and calendar in the Layers panel. Make this stand out by draping them across the whole of the image. Use the handy Constrain Proportions function with this step.



Add snow

04 Finally create a new layer (Layer>New>Layer) and select the Brush tool. Click on the drop-down menu at the bottom of the screen, choose Assorted Brushes and scroll to find the snowflake. Click on the screen where you want the flakes and save your work.



Other months

To create the other months, rearrange the Polaroid frames and change the images. Go to the Layers panel and make sure the object you want to move is selected, then click and drag in to place. Use File>Place to add imagery to the project. Blend the images to add appealing effects by using the Opacity slider. The Opacity has been set at 40% on the palm tree in the middle of the shot. Change the text to match colours within your images.

Next time

• Make selections using the Lasso tool • Design your own personalised invitations • Learn how to add realistic planets to skies • Create a surreal flame made of water • Mix photographs with illustrations



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Nikon Coolpix P610

Should you consider a bridge camera as your next imaging device?

The specs

Company Nikon

Additional specs

- 16-megapixel 1/2.3-in. type
- 60x optical zoom
- Focal length 24 – 1440 mm
- Wi-Fi, NFC and GPS enabled

In an industry where high-megapixel, full frame DSLRs and retro-inspired, trendy-looking CSCs grab a lot of column inches, it can be very easy to overlook something like the Nikon Coolpix P610. Bridge cameras like this boast very impressive zoom ranges; the Nikon Coolpix P610 has a 60x optical zoom that offers the focal length equivalent of 24-1440mm in 35mm, full-frame terms. Of course, the downside is that you are working with a sensor that can't cope with too many megapixels and will inevitably have a comparatively limited dynamic range. That said, many compact system cameras have similarly diminutive sensors and thus similar limitations in terms of image quality.

Despite their small sensor size, bridge cameras offer a handling experience similar to a DSLR, with a substantial grip and manual exposure control options, providing some of the shooting advantages of CSCs and DSLRs.

However, there are some caveats with this particular model that you need to be made aware of. For starters, there's no RAW file format, so you have to capture your images as JPEGs. This is instantly limiting and very far from ideal, so it's a puzzling decision for Nikon to have made. It's not an inherent issue with

bridge cameras: other bridge cameras, after all, do include RAW capture.

The other issue that immediately strikes you is that the screen is not touch-enabled. This is a feature that, while not essential, is becoming increasingly ubiquitous, particularly on fixed lens and interchangeable lens compacts, but also bridge cameras, such as this. It simply makes the experience of using the camera a little less straightforward.

Despite these issues, however, the Coolpix P610 has been turning industry heads and gathering some awards in its relatively short time on the market and it clearly has its share of strong points. The weight and size of the Coolpix P610 are pretty much ideal and, as a result, it feels very good in the hand. Though the screen is not touch-enabled, it can be repositioned for ease of composition. There is also an electronic viewfinder, which boasts an eye sensor to detect when you have lifted the camera to your eye, but it's likely that most people will simply stick to the 3-inch LCD.

Overall, it's a good handling performance; the camera feels very much like a DSLR. The only handling issue that's a little irritating is that, if you use the popular Aperture Priority, you must use the wheel on the back, rather

than the more conveniently placed command dial above the thumb rest, to adjust the aperture value.

Given that the camera can only manage JPEGs, they'd better be rather good. The 16-megapixel sensor is 1/2.3 inches in size, which is a mere fraction of the size of even a micro four-thirds sensor and vastly smaller than the APS-C and 35mm full-frame sensors found in DSLRs. This tends to have an inevitable limiting effect on a camera's potential for high image quality, but the Coolpix P610 genuinely does about as good a job as one could possibly hope for.

Though the images do, of course, look like compact camera snaps rather than professional files – there's tell-tale evidence of that painterly smudging of very fine details, for instance – everything else is top drawer for a small sensor model.

The verdict

8 The Coolpix P610 has a lot of strengths to recommend it, but is slightly let down by the absence of RAW capture as well as a touch-enabled LCD screen.

Capture distant subjects

Capture wildlife images at a considerable distance



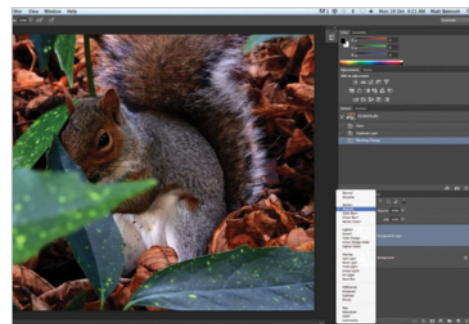
Select a mode

01 If you want to capture a subject that's moving, your best bet is to select the camera's Shutter Priority mode via the main mode dial on top of the camera and opt for a fast shutter speed.



Extend the lens

02 Surrounding the shutter button is the lens zoom control. Use this to extend the zoom lens all the way out to its maximum setting, which is an incredible 1440mm in 35mm terms.



Duplicate the layer

03 The first editing step is to duplicate the main image layer by dragging it onto the relevant button at the base of the Layers palette. Then change the blend mode of the duplicated layer to Multiply.



GOOD COLOURS

The colours that the camera produces are very appealing and nothing appears exaggerated or garish, with the camera avoiding the temptation to over-process.

JPEGS ONLY

The Nikon Coolpix P610 only records images in JPEG format, so your post-processing options are restricted. Fortunately, image quality is very good.



CONNECTIVITY

The Coolpix P610 features both built-in Wi-Fi and NFC, enabling you to control the camera via your smartphone or tablet device and GPS facilitates geotagging.

DSLR-STYLE HANDLING

One of the chief advantages of bridge cameras over traditional compacts is the fact that they offer a better handling experience, with a grip and set of dials that resembles that of a DSLR.

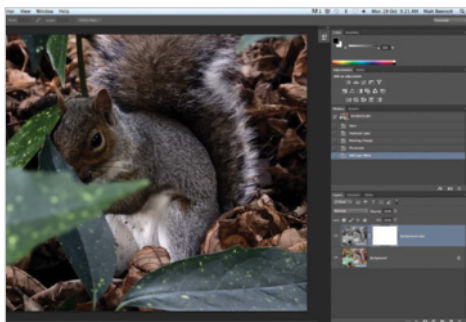
MANUAL CONTROLS

Another key benefit of a bridge camera is the fact that you can capture images in manual exposure mode, enabling you to take full control of the camera and the resulting images.

Standout feature

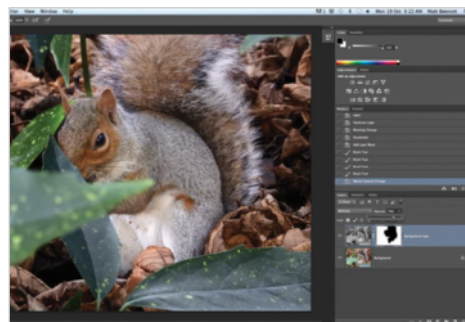
Superzoom lens

A bridge camera like the Nikon Coolpix P610 is ideal as a travel companion and in any situation in which you cannot carry copious amounts of kit around with you, but don't know what photographic opportunities may present themselves. At the wide end of the zoom range, you can capture landscapes and scenic shots, while the telephoto end enables you to pick out distant details.



Refine the effect

04 Press Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U to desaturate the duplicate layer – you do not want to enrich the colours at all. Create a layer mask so that you can refine the effect further in the next step.



Use the brush

05 Now use a black brush to paint over the main subject and bring back the original luminosity levels. You may find that the effect is improved by lowering the opacity of the background copy.

SOFTWARE

Price £233.27/\$299US Web www.fxhome.com/photokey

TOOLS

Find all the necessary steps to editing your green screen composition down the left-hand side of the screen, including masks, importing pictures and adding text.

TWEAK

Use the sliders on the right of the program to alter your foreground and background to create a harmonious composition.

The specs

Company FXHOME

Additional specs

Window 7 and above
Mac 10.8 and above
2GB RAM



PREVIEW WINDOW

Preview everything in the centre of the screen, and drag the image to place it elsewhere on the canvas.

PhotoKey 7 Pro

Make edges easy and remove green screens in a single click using PhotoKey 7 Pro

Often, there's a fine line, literally, between a killer composition and a badly edited mess. Cutting out subjects can be one of the most time-consuming and pedantic jobs in photo editing.

If you're a photographer that shoots subjects before importing them onto backgrounds, you most probably use a green screen. PhotoKey 7 Pro is a software package designed for taking your subjects out of the green and into your compositions, and as well as the simple act of cutting out, it offers a plethora of tools to keep everything simple.

PhotoKey 7 Pro looks and feels Photoshopyesque. The screen is split between the Home and Edit screens; Home gives news of FXHOME updates, including videos and user guides to help you with your editing, and Edit is where the editing magic happens.

First, import both a foreground and background, and PhotoKey will automatically remove any green from the foreground to place it cleanly against its backdrop. In some cases, this is a one-step fix; PhotoKey is perhaps superior to Photoshop at removing green, and can do so in just a single click.

The positives of PhotoKey 7 Pro are huge: the Masking tool is still one of the finest and most precise masking tools of any top photo-editing package, and there are almost limitless options as far as blending is concerned. You can tweak the tone and hue of your picture, but unfortunately you can only tweak the background and foreground individually rather than as a pair. You can also insert an overlay on top of your final image and tweak the positioning of layers, as well as adding text and effects to the final picture.

PhotoKey 7 Pro offers creative alternatives to cutting out your subjects, and though it's not the complete editing experience, it's more than adept at making erasing green screens and blending subjects into their surroundings. It's a program that you can use with or without Photoshop: you might want to use it as a first step to fix your composition before you get more adventurous with it later, but it also stands alone. It's great at making edges easy, and that makes it worth the money.

The verdict

8

A great tool for anyone who enjoys creating compositions, PhotoKey 7 Pro is versatile and excels at cutting out subjects with minimal fuss.

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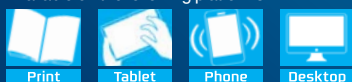


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HARDWARE

Price £54.99 / \$69.95 US Web www.wacom.com

Wacom Intuos Draw

Create paintings and learn to digitally sketch with the Intuos Draw

The specs

Company Wacom

Additional specs

- Windows
- Mac

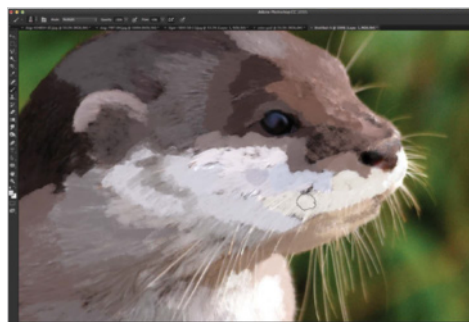


SCREEN

The screen of the Draw measures in at 152 x 95mm; it's a little on the small side, but more portable and compact than most tablets.

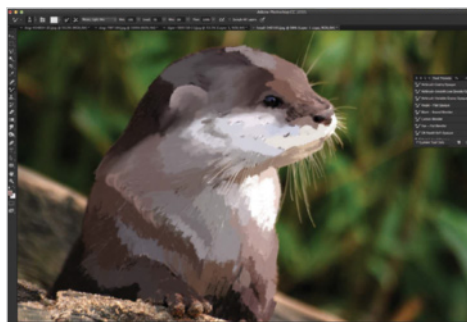
Start creating digital paintings

Use the Draw's features for making great art



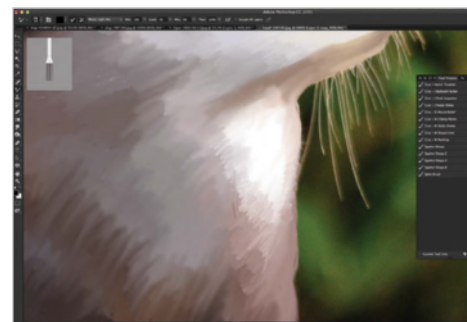
Start painting

01 Grab a brush – we've supplied a pack on the FileSilo – and select colours by clicking Alt/Opt before shading and hatching on a new layer. The Draw is great for sketching short fur, because of the size of the tablet.



Use the Mixer Brush

02 Grab the Mixer Brush and choose Moist, Light Mix. Clean the brush every time by using the top bar, and start blurring and blending the colours of the otter together to create a watercolour look.



Get detailed

03 You might want to reduce brush size to paint detailed fur. Use the Draw's touch sensitivity to vary how detailed you want the fur to be, and sketch in the same direction to keep the pattern consistent.

SHIFT AND ALT/OPT

The Alt/Opt button can be pivotal for brushing in Photoshop, as it can be used to pick colours while you're using the Brush.



PEN

The crux of your drawing process – the pen – includes a Ctrl/right-click button which enables you to change brush while you're working.

It's a given in the world of Photoshop that if you want to become a top digital artist, you need a graphics tablet. A mouse simply won't suffice if you want to wield a brush with precision, control and finesse, but you'd be forgiven for not knowing where to begin your adventure when it comes to digital painting, given the wealth of options on the market.

The most reasonably priced tablet that digital art giant Wacom offers, is the Intuos Draw. The Draw is a modest tablet, smaller than a sheet of A4 paper, with just four ExpressKey buttons, an accompanying pen and a black, dotted screen. It's a far cry from some of the other models that Wacom produces – such as the £1,000+ Cintiq – but does it offer as much as some of the more established tablets out there?

The first thing that strikes you about the Draw is that it seems childlike, with a matte finish, curved edges and simple design. It's easily installed with a driver, and although the pen that comes with the tablet is a little on the light side, you can set it up and start playing within minutes. It's easy to get the hang of; the two sets of two buttons control various different keyboard keys such as Alt/

Opt and Cmd/Ctrl, and the pen hovers nicely over the surface with little friction. There isn't much more to talk about in terms of features though; while some Wacom tablets come with ExpressKey remotes, the Draw is small enough for you to control everything with your hands while you're drawing.

The actual drawing experience is a carefree one, too. The pen glides smoothly, and the Draw is extremely accurate. You needn't worry about resting your hand on the tablet, and the dotted surface can in fact help when you're trying to keep to a grid. If you're right-handed, hitting the Alt/Opt button of your left-hand side with your thumb to select a colour while you brush with your second makes drawing even easier than a lot of top-level tablets; incidentally if you're left-handed, it's easy to shift around the shortcuts as if it's any other piece of hardware.

The drawing experience that the Intuos Draw gives is, on the whole, very good. The simplicity of the device is perhaps its most attractive feature, but with that straightforwardness comes its big weakness. The drawing area for the tablet is extremely small: beginners just learning to craft with

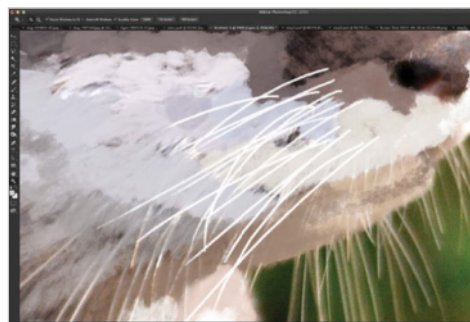
brushes in Photoshop won't worry about this, but anyone with more experience drawing in the program will struggle to cope with the screen. The effortlessness of the Draw will allow you to pick up skills easily, and so it probably won't be long before you outgrow the tablet and seek something for creating more challenging work.

It would be harsh to critique the Draw for its size though, because it's part of what makes the tablet so appealing. In real media terms, it's more like a small sketchpad than a full canvas; it's almost pocket-sized, perhaps more perfect than a bigger tablet for making rough outlines for a composition, and it has charm. The smoothness of the stylus is an upgrade to any mouse, and though you might be better off buying the next size up, the Intuos Art, it's a good first-time tablet.

The verdict

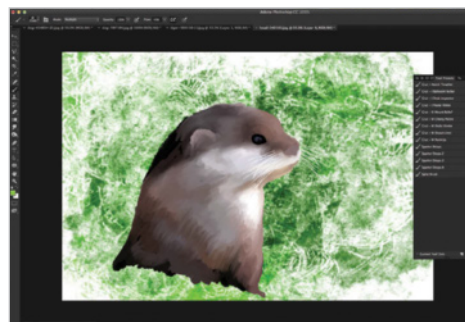
8

Considering the quality and the target audience, the price is extremely reasonable; it's a great first tablet for anyone looking to start painting.



Add flourishes

04 Now we're going to add whiskers. Flick the pen upwards to create the swish, to make it look like the whiskers are getting shorter at the ends. Draw in the eye, and make any other details you'd like to.



Insert a background

05 Get a much bigger brush now, and below your painted layers, paint a washed background. The Draw can just about handle big strokes of paint; layer up until you're happy with the result.

Standout feature

Pinpoint pen precision

Tablets can be awkward and clunky to use when you first make the crossover from a mouse, but ultimately, the rewards can be huge when you're learning to paint. The accuracy of the pen is fantastic, and it's a massive upgrade on whatever mouse you previously used.



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Q+A PHOTOSHOP & ELEMENTS

We put forward some burning questions to our panel of experts

Meet your experts...



Sarah Cousens

"As a designer, using Photoshop isn't just my job; I also love editing my own family photos in my spare time."



Andre Villanueva

"Each year I look forward to seeing how Adobe goes about making Creative Cloud even more interconnected."



Stewart Wood

"For me, Photoshop is always the go-to program for any kind of image editing – whether it is simple or advanced."



Mark White

"Photoshop has extraordinary tools, but you'll never create anything spectacular without a little imagination."



Sarah Shirtcliffe

"Using a Pen and path technique can make a silhouette picture look great when placed on a colourful background."

Get in touch



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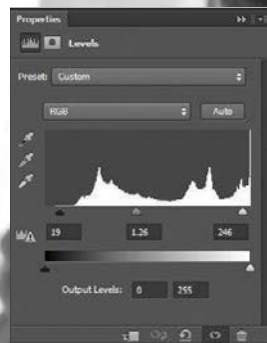


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ADJUSTMENT LAYER WINDOW

Go to Window> Adjustments to add the Adjustments window to your workspace. Now you can add adjustment layers easily by clicking the relevant icon.



ENHANCING AREAS

After clicking the Black & White hand icon, click on an area you want to enhance, such as the eyes in this image, and then drag to the right.

WHAT IS THE BEST METHOD OF CONVERTING A PHOTO TO BLACK AND WHITE?

The quickest way of converting a photo to black and white is by pressing Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+U to desaturate it. However, this method doesn't give the best results and can leave your image looking flat. Instead, add a Black & White adjustment layer. The sliders adjust how bright or dark a colour is in your image. Increasing the percentage will brighten and therefore emphasise a certain colour, whereas decreasing it will darken that colour and de-emphasise it. Just below the preset option there is a hand icon with an arrow either side. Click on this and your cursor becomes an eyedropper. You can now click on

a part of your image and drag left and right to darken or lighten the original colour. Adding a Levels adjustment layer enables you to further enhance the contrast in your image; experiment with adjusting the three sliders to suit your image and the effect you are trying to achieve.

Another way of creating interesting black-and-white-effects is to make a copy of your black-and-white image (press Cmd/Ctrl+A to select the canvas, Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+C to copy from all layers, and Cmd/Ctrl+V to paste), and try out different blending modes to see what you prefer. Hard Light, Screen and Soft Light are worth trying.

REVEAL YOUR WATERMARK

Using an adjustment layer on your image with extreme settings will reveal your hidden watermark. Magic!

HIDDEN IN VIEW

Hide your watermark among the logos on a sportsman's shirt; only the most observant thief will find it.

HOW CAN I CREATE A HIDDEN WATERMARK IN PHOTOSHOP?

Watermarks can easily be removed in Photoshop – even by a beginner – and embedded information can be removed and replaced by someone else who doesn't own the rights to the image. A hidden watermark won't stop people from stealing your work but it can help you to prove that the original work is yours. With a hidden watermark you can prove that the image is yours and settle any disagreements.



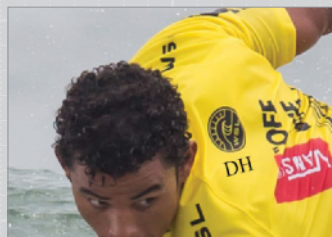
Watermark



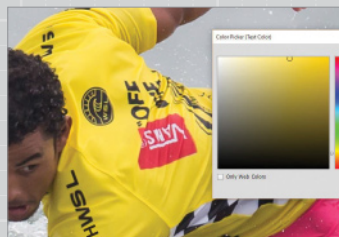
Stewart's expert edit Create a hidden watermark



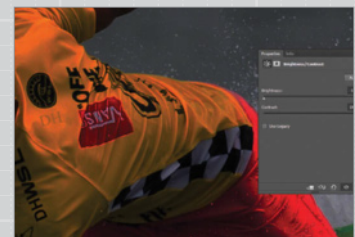
01 Open the image you want to protect with a watermark, select the Type tool (T), find a good spot on the image and then click once to start typing.



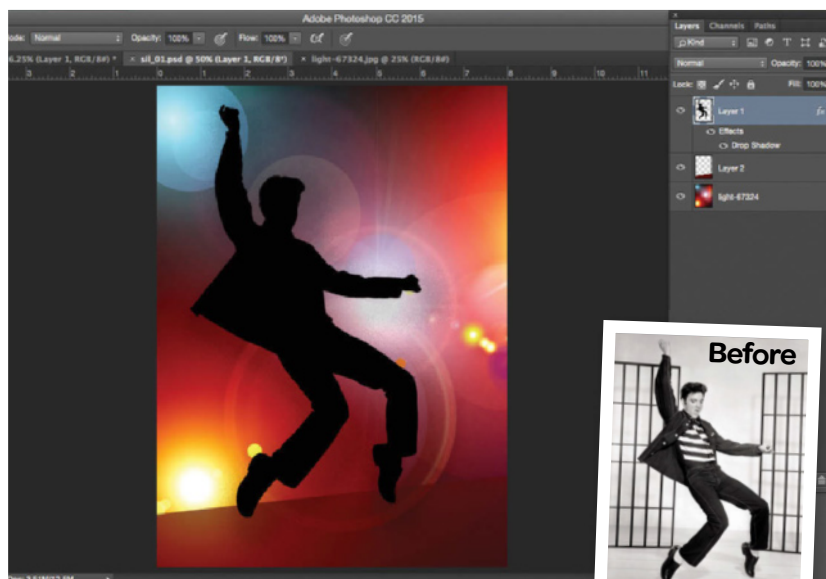
02 Type in some text like a business name or your initials. We'll create two watermarks in this tutorial; resize and rotate the text if necessary.



03 Now using the Type tool, select the text and click on the colour to change it. We have chosen a colour from the shirt in an area next to the watermark.



04 In the Color Picker, drop the RGB values by 2 and click OK. Now add a Brightness and Contrast adjustment layer to test out the watermark.



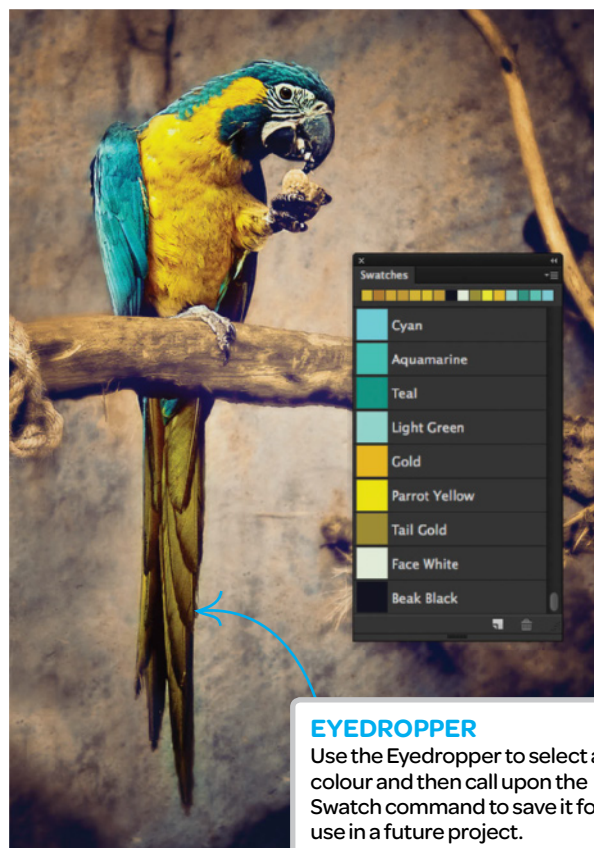
HOW SHOULD I TURN A PERSON INTO A SILHOUETTE?

Start by unlocking the layer by dragging the lock to the trash can in the Layers window, then duplicate the layer. Now select the Pen tool and carefully draw an outline. Take your time and use lots of pen points for a good selection. When finished, click the path box at the top-left and choose the Make a Selection option. This will change your path into marching ants. Create a new layer and paint inside the marching ants with black, making sure the new layer is selected. Hit return to deselect when finished. This leaves a black silhouette of your chosen object. Next add Layer>Layer Style>Drop Shadow and make sure the Distance and Spread sliders are around 40 to 50, the Size 100 and the Opacity around 20. This spreads the drop shadow so it's not noticeable but adds depth to the plain silhouette. Use File>Place to add your chosen image as the background. Be sure to drag it towards the bottom of the Layers window so all other imagery is above. Save (Cmd/Ctrl+S) when finished.

CAN I SAVE COLOURS I USE FOR FUTURE PROJECTS?

If you're working on a series of pictures in Photoshop, or even if you just like working with the same colour palettes for your projects, you might find yourself wanting to return to the same shades of colours to use.

Instead of having to remember or write down hex codes though, use the Swatches command. You can add any colour to the Swatches by selecting it with the Eyedropper tool, clicking on the Foreground swatch and clicking the Add to Swatches button. Give it a name, and Photoshop will remember the exact shade for when you want to use it again later.

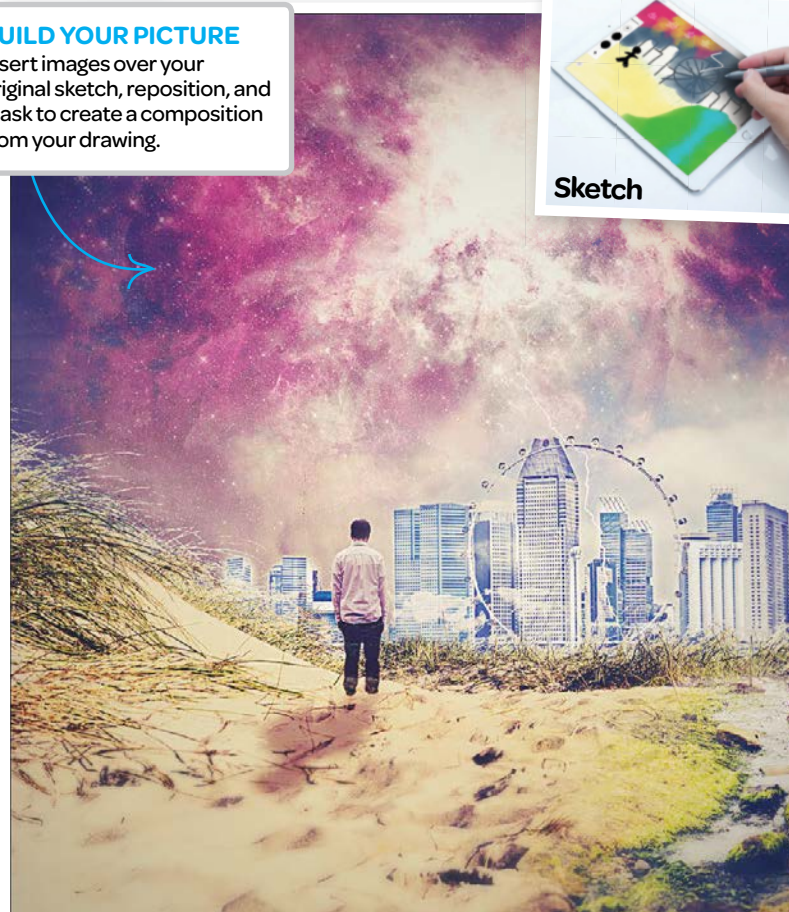


EYEDROPPER

Use the Eyedropper to select a colour and then call upon the Swatch command to save it for use in a future project.

BUILD YOUR PICTURE

Insert images over your original sketch, reposition, and mask to create a composition from your drawing.



WHAT'S THE EASIEST WAY TO SKETCH MY IDEAS AND IMPORT INTO PHOTOSHOP?

For great artists, inspiration can strike at any time. With this in mind, Adobe brought out the Sketch CC app, a tool that you can use to make rough drawings on your tablet, before importing them into Photoshop.

Download the app from your store, and use the icons on the left-hand side of the app to pick a brush, flow and colour to start drawing with. You can import pictures using the Photo icon at the top and add shapes using the Shape icon; simply sketch out a preliminary idea for a composition, and then export using the Upload icon. Once you've exported your sketch to Photoshop or the Creative Cloud, you can build your composition over your rough drawing.



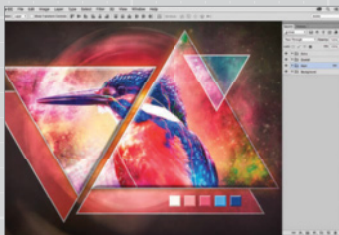
HOW DO I MANAGE ASSETS USING CC LIBRARIES?

There is one thing for sure and that is that Adobe's really pushing the 'Cloud' part of Creative Cloud. With the centralisation of your creative assets, it's now easier than ever before to share across users and apps (both desktop and mobile). Libraries (Window>Libraries) serve as your digital hub. Use the default My Library or create any number of libraries.

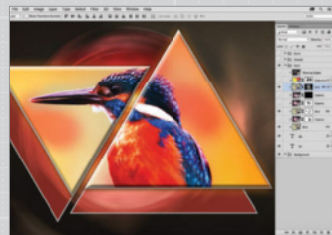
Adding to the library is simple. Drag graphics and text into the library. You can also store styles and colours with the appropriate buttons at the bottom of the palette. When you want to reuse any of these assets, just go to Libraries. Your cloud-synced assets are ready to deploy or share with collaborators!



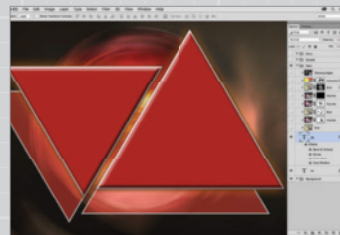
Andre's expert edit Add assets to CC Libraries



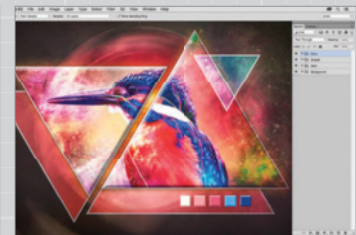
01 Open a document with assets you want to save in your library. Go to Window>Libraries. You can use My Library or create a new one.



02 To add a graphic, you can drag from the canvas into the library. You can also select the layer, and then click the Add Graphics button.



03 To add text, use the same procedure as step 2. Character styles and layer styles can also be stored by using the appropriate buttons.



04 To store colour, use the Eyedropper tool to first capture it. The Add Foreground Color button will change to reflect the new colour. Click to add.

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO WARP REALITY WITH THE LIQUIFY TOOL?

When we think of the Liquify tool, we think of subtle sculpting. It's amazing how far you can take the tool though, and with some drastic reshaping, you can create new objects from existing ones in your pictures.

This fruit bowl turns every object into a new shape. Grab the Forward Warp tool and drag it from the centre of an object, and you'll create a corner; do this to a sphere, such as an apple, and you'll be able to turn it into a cube. By using the Forward Warp to smooth edges, coupled with the Pucker and Bloat giving more or less depth to the sides of your shapes, you can create perfectly even shapes from objects that originally looked completely different.

For more control, reduce the size of the Forward Warp to create a pointier corner, or keep using a bigger brush to warp the whole of the object.



MASK

Use the Polygonal Lasso and hit the Mask icon to create a perfectly straight edge to your objects.

Quick tip Always fix your photos

You are probably guilty of binning old photos that are scratched, blemished or damaged, but try to avoid doing this, as they can be easily repaired – once you know how! Use a mixture of the Clone Stamp, Content-Aware and the Spot Healing brush to repair the images, and bring in normal brushes for colours. You will be truly amazed at how much can be fixed by applying these simple edits. It's worth spending the short amount of time fixing damaged photos.

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38 BACKGROUNDS

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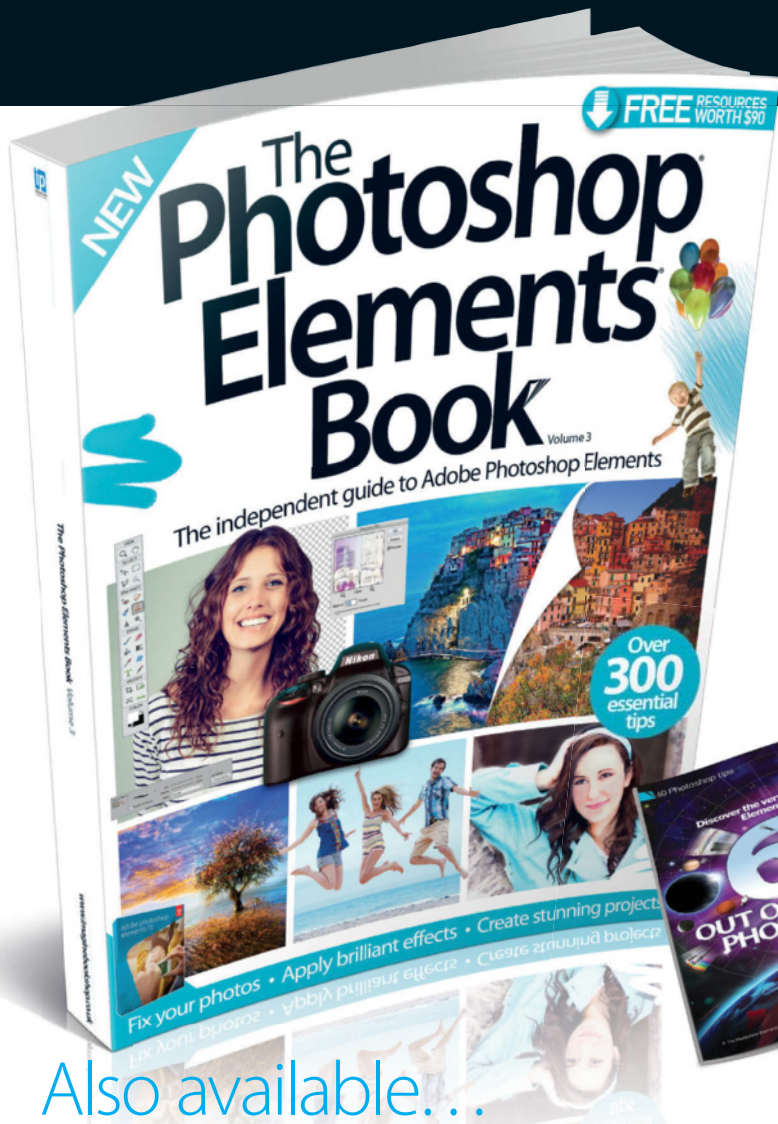
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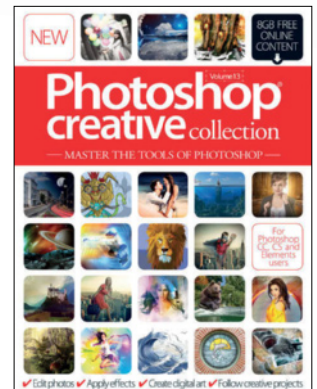
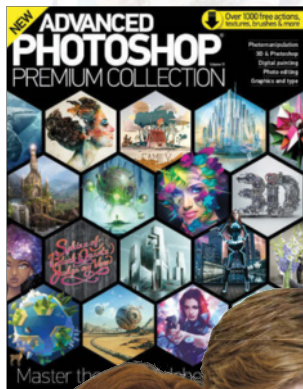


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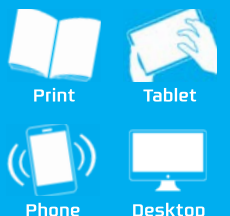
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The Making of Silvana

See how Mariana used blend modes, brushes and layers to create this stylish portrait poster

The basis

First, I inserted a portrait and turned it to black and white by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U. Then I added a wintery tree photo and used the Linear Burn blend mode to merge.



Adding the subject

I added the same portrait again, and masked so that only the leaves covered in snow showed over the subject, using a clipping mask to add more.



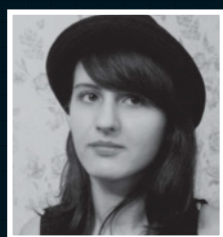
Play with brushes

I experimented with brushes behind the subject for a dreamy, ethereal look. These were on a new layer, set to 80% Opacity in Overlay mode.



Adjust

As a final touch, I added a warming Photo Filter to the picture to counteract the coldness of the composition. I also added a Curves adjustment and increased the contrast slightly.



Mariana Angelova

We talk about the flair of creativity and the importance of being individual with freelance designer Mariana

Mariana is an Electronics graduate from Bulgaria who has always had a passion for design. "I love portraits of women, as they give me freedom when I design," she says. "And I love blend modes, as they can completely change the whole vision of your work." We spoke to Mariana to find out more about her inspiration.

Can you tell us what you think makes a great composition, Mariana?

Something that catches my eye. I like pictures that have a main character, whether a man, woman or animal. Other elements added shouldn't distract the attention of the viewer, but rather make the main character pop out.

Is this a rule that you follow yourself when you create work in Photoshop?

I try to keep all my pictures completely different from each other, but in almost 80 per cent of them, I combine nature and female photography. In the rest, I use various brushes to create an abstract feel in the composition. I like variety though, and doing different things.

Do you usually start your pictures with a quick sketch, then?

I don't usually sketch. I usually just start designing and see where my own creativity

takes me! I don't put any particular message in my work either, but because most of my works include female subjects, I want to create a tender and sensual look.

What advice would you give to Photoshop beginners?

Don't copy someone else. If you like someone's work, try the same technique, but tell your own story. Show your vision. You have to be different and be yourself.

To see more of Mariana's art visit www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Mariana26

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